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## SOME REMINISCENCES







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*[Nicholson's portrait.*

**SIR LIONEL PHILLIPS, BART., D.L., J.P. (LONDON, 1924).**

*[Frontispiece*

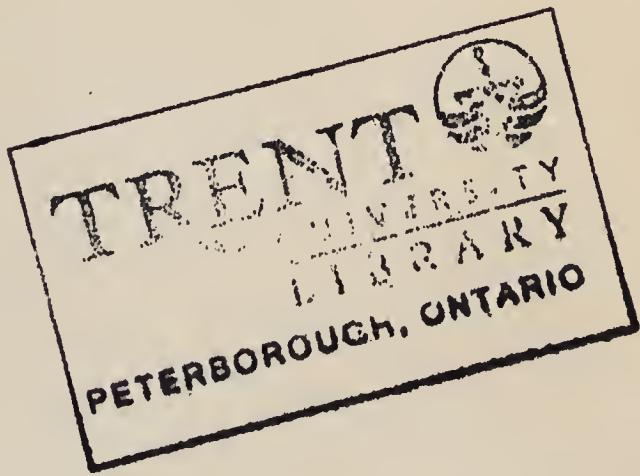
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# SOME REMINISCENCES<sup>22</sup>

BY  
LIONEL PHILLIPS

AUTHOR OF "TRANSVAAL PROBLEMS"

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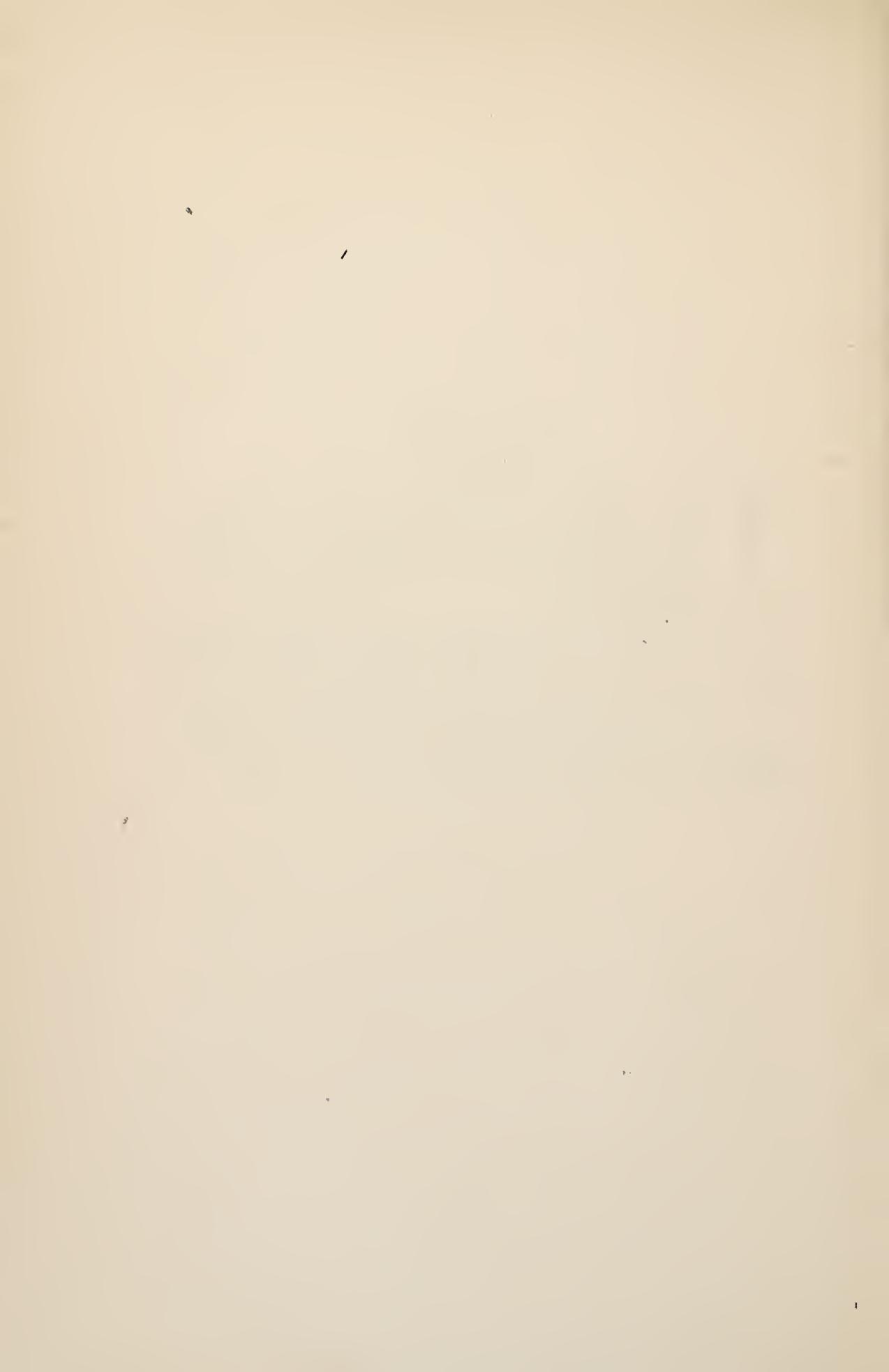
TO  
MY WIFE



## P R E F A C E

THE output of published Memoirs has become so great that I feel impelled to apologise for inflicting yet another volume upon the reading public.

My intention at the outset was to write a purely personal account of my life for my family, but as some of the events in which I took part have at times engaged public attention, I have been advised to place the book within the reach of a wider circle. That is my excuse for the intrusion.



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## INTRODUCTION

I WILL try to tell my story consecutively, without any preliminary recourse to books and letters, so that it may unfold itself spontaneously. My memory is not bad, and striking episodes are so deeply engraved upon the brain that they can be easily and accurately withdrawn from the mental storehouse. It is probably true that nothing seen, heard, or thought is ever lost. It may be hidden amongst the myriads of cells and be inaccessible at will, especially if unimportant and hence only faintly recorded, but under specific conditions, sub- or super-normal, even faint impressions emerge from their retreat clear as daylight. Thus in dreams we sometimes see minute details of things—for instance, the pattern of a Persian rug—lost when we are awake. Events of a stirring character, however, are deeply cut upon the mind and rise without effort when the period of their occurrence is under review. In the course of my story matters will crop up upon which there will no doubt be room for genuine differences of opinion. I can only state mine. There shall not be consciously admitted any element of fiction. Dates, I know, over stretches of time, are apt to play tricks upon us, and I shall therefore verify them carefully.

In concluding these introductory phrases I make no apology for skipping my early life. My education had been slight. A fair knowledge of the French language, of no use in South Africa, and a respectable groundwork in chemistry, which I loved, comprised my chief scholastic equipment. I had to study as best I might out of working hours. Fortunately for me, my future father-in-law was a man of science and his general knowledge was amazing. He taught me surveying and many other useful things. Before going to South Africa I did acquire a smattering of Dutch, as spoken in Holland. When I proceeded to air my accomplishment at a Boer farm, and in a very elementary direction, the attempt was greeted with roars of laughter. The unsophisticated Boer did not heed my feelings in displaying his! I did not utter a word in that language again until I had mastered a few sentences of the *Taal* and had learned that *wij zijn* in Holland had become *ons is* at the Cape—just the difference, to translate, between “we are” and “us is.”

As a foundation for readers whose knowledge of South Africa or its history may be lacking or indistinct, I will now give a brief synopsis—not, of course, from memory alone—of the dramatic events that had taken place between the eighteenth century and the time of my arrival. The facts are drawn from many reliable sources, such as Mr. W. Basil Worsfold’s *South Africa*, and I trust will convey some idea of what had gone before to account for the state of feeling and consequences manifested during my residence in the country.

If the student should find no material to enrich his store of knowledge, the general reader will be interested in following the impressive story, compressed as it is, and, though he may be familiar with some or all of the incidents, he will not be wearied by the recapitulation, for tales of heroism, like classic works, never become tiresome.

From the days of long ago up to the date of my first voyage, South Africa had been the field of stirring events and unexpected revelations. Since I have known it, there have rarely been many dull or tranquil moments. The complex problem of races alone has kept excitement, expectation, and anxiety alive. Looking into the distant retrospect when the Bushmen painted upon the walls of their caves, and showed a glimmering of artistic perception, in spite of their lowly place in the human scale ; when a race of men long dead and lost in the annals of history, but obviously advanced in knowledge, built Zimbabwe—whose ruins still perplex the antiquarian ; when the Portuguese established two ports of call, *alla* and *dela* Goa ; when the Dutch first seized the Cape, and tribes of savages ate each other up, Africa was in a state of perpetual strife. Settled communities of white men since the sixteenth century have gradually become established and have explored and somewhat tamed the ferocity in being. They have diminished the wanton waste of life, but still, right up to and into my own days, horrible carnage was endemic and the struggle against the pristine wildness waged. Within my recollection, dauntless missionaries, scorning danger amongst cannibals, have pursued

their pious errand. Heroic hunters, pioneers, and traders have risked death in a hundred forms in unknown regions where thirst reigned and often triumphed.

The Dutch East India Company regarded the Cape merely as a port of call between Holland and the East, and, beyond defending a small area in its vicinity, did not favour colonisation farther afield. About the middle of the seventeenth century the Company decided to establish a provision station at the Cape, and Johan van Riebeck was sent out in command of the expedition and landed in 1652. From that date until the end of the century "Their High Mightinesses" in Holland acquiesced in the settlement of free burghers upon the land. Two very able administrators, Simon and Willem Adriaan van der Stel (father and son), who succeeded van Riebeck, carried on the pioneering work of settlement with a view to providing the passing ships of the Company with provisions and pure water. Fresh vegetables were of prime consequence against scurvy—the great scourge of navigation in those days. They governed wisely, and under their rule large quantities of trees, shrubs, and ornamental plants were imported and planted. In 1707 Willem Adriaan was recalled in disgrace. The story of his ill-treatment has been told by many writers, and it is beyond the scope of this flying survey to reopen it here. Miss Fairbridge, in her *History of South Africa*, brings us in a brief but painstaking review into close touch with the personages and problems of the time.

The beginning of the eighteenth century saw

the introduction of a new policy at the instance of the supreme Seventeen in Holland. They forbade officers of the Company to acquire land, and, as a result, their interest in expansion and development waned. Notwithstanding the blow aimed at settlement, the burghers continued to roam farther afield and from time to time the Company's boundaries had to be extended. Trouble naturally arose with the natives, and the commando system came into being, under which the regular forces were reinforced by civilian detachments. Thus the wandering propensities of the Boers were stimulated and their dislike of regulations and officialdom accentuated. The power of the Dutch East India Company had been waning, and their subjects in South Africa were discontented and rebellious. The hatred of authority was as pronounced under Dutch rule as it became subsequently under British rule, but the population was small, and open conflict therefore against rulers was not likely to attain serious proportions. Education was either entirely lacking or of a most primitive kind ; hence it is not surprising that the virile burghers saw no necessity for laws and regulations and flew from them. Into the areas they had won they were pursued however, as in later days, by the march of law and order. Of course the invading burghers found their progress disputed by the natives, and, as far back as 1781, the first recognised Kaffir war took place, and in 1789 a second contest. As the inhabitants increased, so the intrigues, sometimes grossly dishonest, against governors and officials multiplied, and " Their High

Mightinesses " in Holland had to deal with a growing flood of charges, petitions, supplications, and embarrassments from their South African subjects. But, after all, this is only the history of colonisation everywhere.

At the time of the French Revolution and ten days after the execution of Louis XVI, the National Convention declared war on England and on the Government of the Stadholder. Holland and the Dutch East India Company were on the verge of bankruptcy. The disaffected burghers at the Cape seized the opportunity to rise in revolt and avowed their sympathy with the French. Graaff Reinet led the outbreak and Swellendam followed. The yoke of the Dutch Company was to be thrown off. The discontented burghers did not scruple to invite and use the aid of natives. Holland was overrun by the French and the Prince of Orange took refuge in England. During 1795 the British Fleet and troops arrived in Table Bay, the revolt was suppressed, and the British Flag hoisted at the Castle on September 16th, 1795. Between that date and 1803, when the Cape reverted to the Batavian Republic under the Treaty of Amiens between France and England, the English Governors were beset with many difficulties, including native unrest and Boer disaffection. In 1798 Graaff Reinet was in revolt, and, according to Miss Fairbridge, "the Graaff Reinet Boers decided to ask the assistance of the Kaffirs against such of their white fellow-burghers as refused to join in a raiding expedition against the rest of the Colony " (p. 136). The rebellion was suppressed by General Dundas,

and although two of the leaders were condemned to death, they were not executed.

The seven and a half years of the first British occupation were full of troublesome conflicts. In 1799 the third Kaffir War broke out. Hottentots and Kaffirs in overwhelming numbers ravaged the Zuurveld, killing great numbers of settlers and cutting off a detachment of an officer and 120 troops, all of whom save four were slaughtered after a gallant fight. The forces available were unable to subdue the natives and a patched-up peace was effected. The Boers were, of course, loud in their denunciation of their "betrayal," but their own aloofness from the struggle was in a great measure responsible for the result.

Lady Anne Barnard has left in her letters a graphic picture of life and affairs during her stay at the Cape with her husband, Andrew Barnard, who was Colonial Secretary under Lord Macartney.

During a brief interregnum of peace between France and England the Batavian Republic held sway, and her representatives endeavoured to keep the rival Kaffir tribes from attacking each other and the white settlers.

In the spring of 1803 England again declared war against France, owing to her non-fulfilment of the provisions of the Treaty of Amiens. Renewed hostilities rendered it necessary to take the Cape for considerations of naval safety. Thus, in 1806, after the battle of Blaauwberg, Great Britain became once more mistress of the Cape. The final cession was not made until 1814. At that time England was actuated rather by strategical

reasons than by the policy of colonial expansion. Colonisation has always grown from the seeds of commerce, and South African development has not been exceptional in that respect. A few enterprising Englishmen, with friends in the garrison or maritime service, went to the Cape and gradually mingled with the Dutch population, which had absorbed the French Huguenot refugees who sought the shelter of the little Protestant settlement after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The Authorities in Holland had certainly taken no pains to endear themselves to the Dutch settlers, and the British Government trod in their footsteps. But for her mismanagement at home and through her colonial officers during the first quarter of a century of British rule, the history of South Africa would have been quite different. Stupidity of the local officials, callous disregard of the burghers' views, ignorance and conceit on the spot, coupled with parsimony at home, planted the weed of hatred that has not yet been extirpated.

In 1815, when Lord Charles Somerset was Governor, a Hottentot regiment was enrolled. It was not a novel or an exclusively English expedient. Had it been employed only in duty connected with natives, no exception would have been taken to its formation, although a handful of whites among hordes of savages would not be enthusiastic about arming any of them. But its services were not restricted to natives. A farmer named Frederick Bezuidenhout was summoned to appear before the Landdrost Andries Stockenstrom for detain-

ing a Hottentot servant against his will. The charge was the outcome of a report by a Commission of Dutch judges appointed by Lord Caledon to enquire into alleged cases of cruelty on the part of the farmers. Bezuidenhout refused a first and a second time to obey the summons. Finally, Field-Cornet Opperman was instructed to have him arrested. He sent, for the purpose, an official named Johannes Londt, with a sergeant and fourteen men of the Hottentot Corps, under the command of Lieutenant Rousseau and Lieutenant Mackay, as an escort. This regiment had been raised to guard the frontier. A tragedy ensued that throws light upon the wildness and lawlessness of the times, and the reckless bravery, misguided in this instance, of the pioneers. That incident ended in a serious revolt; in consequence of which five of the ringleaders suffered capital punishment. The Hon. Henry Cloete, LL.D., gives a full account of the affair in his *History of the Great Boer Trek* (pp. 16-29), which substantially agrees with the more condensed version of Miss Fairbridge in her *History of South Africa*. She omits the distressing accident that occurred at the scaffold, which failed to sustain its burden, and the half-dead culprits, after their partial recovery, were hanged a second time. Such revolting procedure would not be tolerated in these days. But the justice of the sentences is admitted by both writers. As there is still a good deal of misconception respecting the whole matter, owing to the misrepresentation of those who are never tired of blackening Great Britain and of fanning the

fires of racial hatred, I reproduce below pp. 179-81 of Miss Fairbridge's book :

“Bezuidenhout, with two others, entrenched themselves, well armed, in a cave formed by large rocks, and refused to surrender to the officers, though assured of a safe-conduct to the magistracy. At last the order was given to rush the cave, the sergeant of the Hottentot corps being the first to scale the rocks. As he reached the level the men below saw a rifle thrust forward and shouted to warn the sergeant, who fired into the cave before the rifle could be discharged, and Bezuidenhout was killed.

“It is clear that Bezuidenhout met his death in resisting the lawful summons sent by Landdrost Stockenstrom. But over his grave fierce funeral orations were delivered by his brother Johannes and others, and a revolt planned which would end in ‘driving the English into the sea’—regardless of the fact that no Englishman had been responsible for Bezuidenhout’s arrest or death. It was the old story of revolt against authority, and the flame of rebellion was fanned by a Boer named Hendrik Prinsloo, who threw himself into the matter with ardour, riding from farm to farm in the Zuurveld, stirring up bad feeling, and telling the farmers that the new system of quit-rent was a device of the English to ruin them. Very like the story of van der Stel over again, is it not ?

“Not content with stirring up the Boers, Prinsloo resorted to the shameful expedient of calling on the Kaffirs to aid in the work of driving out all white men who represented authority. Rousseau was to be murdered, so was van der Graaff, the deputy-Landdrost of Cradock. No farmer who remained loyal to the Government should be allowed to retain his cattle, decreed the leaders

of the rebellion. The Kaffirs were to have these, also the cattle of the troops, and they would be given all the Zuurveld—if only Gaika, the chief of the Kosa tribe comprising the Gaika and Galika clans, would join them in their schemes, or so they said.

“A Boer named Faber was put in command of the expedition sent to interview Gaika, to communicate these proposals to him, and to represent to him that Colonel Cuyler, Landdrost of Uitenhage, intended to visit him and shoot him treacherously. As a matter of fact, Colonel Cuyler was at that moment engaged in writing earnest appeals to the rebels to desist from their mad and wicked schemes.

“‘Spare your blood,’ he wrote; ‘it depends on yourselves. . . . Judge of yourselves, burghers, whether any injury or injustice had been done you. Let two of your most sensible men come to me, and I shall do you justice whenever you bring a just case before me. The two persons who may come to me shall be sent back without any hindrance.’

“His efforts were useless. Johannes Bezuidenhout, Prinsloo, and the rest of the rebels continued to set the country aflame, and at last the Landdrost led an expedition against them. At the moment when a fight was imminent, at a place called Slachter’s Nek, news reached the rebel Boers that Gaika had decided not to join them. Panic-stricken, a number of them threw down their arms; the remainder fled, but were pursued and captured by a force under Major Fraser—making a final resistance, in which Johannes Bezuidenhout was killed.

“The ringleaders were tried before Judges Hiddingh and Diemal, with Mr. Beelaerts van Blokland as Secretary, and six of them were condemned

to death. One of these, an old man named Willem Frederick Kruger, was, however, pardoned by Lord Charles Somerset ; the remainder were executed.

“ This is the story of Slachter’s Nek, and it is necessary that the main points should be grasped clearly, for much harm has been done by representing it as a racial matter. It was a rebellion organised against law and order, and it has been truly said :

“ ‘ The Dutch were as much concerned in hanging the rebels as the English. Dutchmen were in command of the forces that attacked them ; a Dutch official prosecuted them ; a Dutch judge sentenced them ; a Dutch magistrate hanged them ; and all that the English Governor did was to pardon one of them.’ ”

Looking back upon the trouble to-day, when humanitarian instincts are far more highly developed and death-sentences are far less commonly carried out, we may condemn the stern measures resorted to, especially as many of the loyal Dutch who had helped to crush the revolt sued for the lives of their misguided compatriots, but the crime was beyond doubt grave—especially the appeal to the natives for help.

The reader may think that undue prominence is given to this comparatively minor episode in a short historical review, but the beam used for the executions at Slachter’s Nek has a part to play later on. Hence the emphasis.

The inflexible vindication of the law was resented throughout the Colony and was raked up whenever grievances arose. The Boers, who had not

scrupled to invoke the aid of the natives on various unlawful occasions, were outraged at the use of an organised and well-disciplined section of them against a recalcitrant compatriot who had defied constituted authority. “Circumstances alter cases.” We are all prone to look leniently upon our own frailties—the old story of the mote and the beam. It is a curious fact that the Boers who had invaded lands occupied by the natives, had frequently contested rights with them by force of arms, who knew their capacity for treachery, and indeed held their position through the respect won by their rifles, should have ever reckoned upon loyal assistance from the natives. The explanation probably lies in the enmity of the tribes against each other. We shall see later on, at a time when the tribes were more consolidated (particularly in the war between Dingaan and Panda), how the white men took advantage of that circumstance. Europeans in the enjoyment at home of safe and well-organised systems of administration are unable to appreciate the sensitiveness of small white communities on this subject. There is nothing sentimental in that sensitiveness. It arises from the well-founded conviction that caste must be upheld. In those days the white settlers were in dread of their lives, and with reason. The growth of white population was exceedingly small. Not until 1820 was any attempt made to strengthen it. Then, as the result of grave distress and unemployment in England after the Napoleonic wars, rather less than 4,000 British emigrants were recruited and sent to the Cape under heartless con-

ditions. They were needed as a barrier against the incursions of natives into parts of the Eastern Province of the Cape Colony occupied by British and Dutch settlers. They were carefully selected, in one sense, as healthy, sturdy men and women, but they were neither trained soldiers nor agriculturists, and suffered cruel torments of many kinds. Bad seasons and ignorance of husbandry hampered them, while onslaughts of savages haunted their earlier years. Their chequered career is eloquently described by Professor Sir George Edward Cory in the Cambridge History. True to their vigorous ancestry, they played a noble part and to-day their descendants are traced to the number of a hundred and fifty thousand, whose names survive in some of the most respected families of South Africa.

But to grasp the situation we must hark back a few years. The slave trade was encouraged by the Dutch East India Company. According to Cloete (p. 45), the Batavian Government between 1803 and 1806 manifested their intention to suppress the trade, but it was flourishing at the time its suppression was determined by the British Government. The last cargo of negroes was landed in 1807. In the following year the traffic in black humanity was finally abolished. The Act of Emancipation was passed by the Imperial Parliament in August 1833. But as late as 1834, according to Theal, 35,745 human beings were still in bondage, and it was only at that date that the Act of Emancipation became effective. The slaves were valued at £3,000,000. Only £1,200,000 was provided as compensation

for their liberation, and claims in that connection had to be proved in London. No wonder the Dutch slave owners bitterly resented the measure and the method of its accomplishment. Many of them were utterly ruined and farms were rendered derelict. The hosts of "protectors" sent out were utterly mischievous and created grave hostility on the part of the slaves towards their owners, with whom previously they had been on friendly terms. The humane intention was lost sight of in the pecuniary losses involved and in the clumsy and irritating fashion in which the affair was handled. It was regarded merely as a case of ruthless Imperial spoliation. What a vast saving in human life and treasure might have been made by a little more outlay in money and a little more sympathetic consideration at that momentous epoch ! It was, in effect, a confiscation of established rights, and was deeply condemned, as all such acts always have and always will be, despite the highest underlying moral aim.

Another event in the same year filled the cup of disaffection. Under the Gaika chief Macomo twelve to fifteen thousand natives invaded the Eastern Province on Christmas Day. It took twelve months of hard fighting by British troops, aided by British and Boer colonists, to turn those marauding savages out of the Cape Colony. At the successful termination of that struggle, known as the Sixth Kaffir War, the Governor, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, extended the colonial territory and, to strengthen the strategic position, made preparations for the erection of a chain of forts

suitably placed near the new boundary. In the territory he proposed to locate a certain number of colonists and friendly Kaffirs under military tenure to prevent renewed encroachments. The policy was well thought out, but unhappily Lord Glenelg, then Secretary of State, under the influence of the negrophile party in England, and upon the amazing ground that the white colonists and not the natives had been the aggressors, reversed the policy, withdrew British sovereignty, and reinstated the savage chiefs and their followers in absolute authority. The action of this amiable gentleman, who was rather a philanthropist than a statesman, infuriated the Dutch and disgusted the British settlers, who, according to official reports, had lost in the campaign, apart from human life, 816 farm houses (all of which had been burnt and pillaged and more than half entirely destroyed), sixty wagons, 5,700 horses, 112,000 cattle, and 162,000 sheep. Twelve years later, under Sir Harry Smith, the policy of D'Urban was adopted and the territory between the Keiskamma and the Kei Rivers annexed as British Kaffraria.

The egregious blunders in connection with the events just related, the hardships caused by the Ordnance of June 1825, by which the paper rixdollar, recognised as 4s., was convertible into silver at 1s. 6d., the action of some missionaries in their partisanship of the natives and unjust attitude to the whites, who learned to detest them, coupled with the well-founded grievances arising from the treatment regarding slave liberation, proved decisive, and a large part of the Boer popula-

tion determined to escape from British rule—hateful to them by that time. In spite of an appeal by Government for them to remain, the Great Trek of 1835–7 began. In the first-named year a party of 100 penetrated as far as the north-east corner of the territory subsequently known as the Transvaal, where they were attacked by natives. Only a remnant, after suffering extreme hardships, got to Delagoa Bay, whence they sailed to Natal.

In 1836, under the leadership of Hendrik Potgieter, two hundred more proceeded gradually to the Vaal River, where they encamped. Here Mosilikatzi attacked them and twenty-five men and women were murdered. Potgieter went into *laager*, formed by a circle of wagons closely packed together, an effective barricade against spearmen, and repulsed a subsequent attack, but lost all his live stock and was stranded until he got into touch with Maroko, a friendly Baralong chief at Thaba N'chu, who sent natives and cattle, by means of which he retired to that point.

Meanwhile larger companies were *trekking* from Graaff Reinet, Albany, Grahamstown, and other places. The principal leaders were Gert Maritz, Andries Pretorius, and Pieter Retief. In all, some 10,000 men, women, and children migrated by the end of 1838, the exodus probably reaching its zenith during 1837. Many of the emigrants assembled at Winburg, where a constitution was framed and Retief elected Commandant-General. Natal was, however, more favoured as a region for permanent settlement than the Orange River district, and

Retief visited Dingaan, who, with his Zulus, ruled the country, in order to secure the cession of a suitable area.

Before recounting what followed, I may briefly trace the Zulu history up to that date. Tshaka was born in Zululand in 1783, quarrelled as a youth with his father, sought the protection of Dingiswayo, another chief, and became his favourite General. Upon the death of Dingiswayo he was elected chief, having proved himself a fearless warrior. Then he organised his braves upon an admirable military system and he entered upon a career of bloody conquest. He ravaged an immense territory and was Paramount Lord from the Limpopo to the borders of Kaffraria. He exterminated whole tribes, and, between the years 1812 and 1828, it is computed that he slaughtered a million persons. Men, women, and children were ruthlessly butchered, and only a few of the finest girls and strongest boys were spared to be incorporated in his nation. Thousands of square miles of the fair land were devastated. Tshaka met his death at the hands of his brothers Dingaan and Umhlangana. The latter was later on done away with in turn by Dingaan, who thus became King of all the Zulus.

Beyond the Drakensburg, Mosilikatzi, a refugee General of Tshaka, was ravaging the hinterland. The depopulation of what became later the Free State and Transvaal was a factor in deciding the *point d'appui* of the Boers who migrated in 1835. While Retief went to Dingaan, Potgieter collected a commando and attacked Mosilikatzi. After nine

days of strenuous fighting, the Kaffirs retired to the northern Transvaal and subsequently crossed the Limpopo, almost annihilated and drove out the slender remainder of the Mashona tribe, and settled upon their territory, now called Matabeleland. We shall renew acquaintance with that region in due course.

Let us return to Dingaan. Finding him favourably disposed, as it seemed, Retief led a large company over the rugged Drakensburg in 1838 and encamped on the Blauw Krantz River. The King signed a deed of cession over part of his country on February 4th. On the following morning he invited Retief and his followers to drink beer at the Royal Kraal prior to their departure, as a token of amity and peace. Having no suspicion of treachery, they accepted, but at a given signal they were set upon by concealed warriors and clubbed to death with cruelty unspeakable. Simultaneously, ten regiments were sent to destroy the Boers in their encampments. Men, women, and children were all put to death; the sole survivor of the nearest camp, a youth who was tending cattle farther afield, was able to warn the other camps in time for the occupants to go into *laager* before the Zulus descended upon them. The furious onslaught failed to take the position, but six hundred Boers and friendly natives were slain before the attack was beaten off. Several abortive attempts were made by Potgieter, Uys, and others to relieve the beleaguered camps. The situation remained one of gravity until November, when Pretorius, with a force of 450 collected in

the Free State of the future, was able to join and take command of the unhappy emigrants. An advance was then made against the headquarters of Dingaan. The greatest precautions against surprise were taken by consistently forming *laagers*. Dingaan let loose his entire forces against the intrepid burghers. The battle on December 16th followed, and resulted in the natives having to retire, after leaving 3,000 dead outside the circle of wagon defences. Dingaan, in terror, fired his capital and retreated northwards. The Boers lost only four men, who died of wounds, and Dingaan's Day is celebrated annually now in South Africa as a public holiday. In 1839 Dingaan quarrelled with his brother Panda, who withdrew with a large following and made common cause with the Boers. Thus, in 1840, he advanced into Zululand, accompanied by a commando under Pretorius, and routed the army of Dingaan. The King fled to the neighbourhood of Delagoa Bay, where his sanguinary career ended in his own murder. In that year Pretorius issued a proclamation, in his capacity as Commandant-General, constituting Panda King of the Zulus and claiming the whole of Natal as conquered territory.

Sir George Napier, then Governor of the Cape Colony, declined formally to recognise the settlement, but the burghers had now virtually secured their independence and were left alone for a time. In 1843, however, the Imperial Government determined to occupy Natal, and a permanent administration was set up at Durban, under Cloete as Commissioner. The choice of a highly respected

officer with a Dutch name was probably made in deference to Boer susceptibilities. Little did the British Government fathom the depth of feeling against them. Armed opposition was offered under Pretorius and Durban was besieged, but the resistance was overcome. Great dissatisfaction arose over the assignment of land, a portion of which was allotted to the natives, and in 1846-7 the bulk of the Boers again trekked away. Some went to the Orange River District, others crossed the Vaal into what became the Transvaal.

Sir Harry Smith became Governor of the Cape in 1847 and proclaimed the country between the Orange and Vaal Rivers British territory under the style of the Orange River Sovereignty. No sooner had the British officials taken up their posts at Bloemfontein than Pretorius requested them to leave. A rising ensued, culminating in the defeat of the insurgents at Boomplaats. Pretorius retired north of the Vaal, and thence intimated that unless the independence of himself and his followers was officially recognised, he would cause and aid a rising in the Orange River Sovereignty. Sir Harry Smith, having insufficient forces to impose other terms, acceded and, under the Sand River Convention, on January 17th, 1852, the South African Republic was founded.

Following this surrender, in the same year trouble arose in the Orange River Sovereignty. Moshesh, the Basuto Chief who subsequently united the scattered tribes into a nation, disputed the annexation and held his own against the British forces for some time. Sir George Cathcart, then Governor at

the Cape, advised the home Government either to abandon the sovereignty or establish a Lieutenant-Governor at Bloemfontein, backed by a force of at least 2,000 troops. The weaker choice was made, and on February 23rd, 1854, the independent Orange Free State came into being.

The Boers of the Free State were more enlightened and less hostile to the British Government than those in the Transvaal. Their earlier years of independence were harassed constantly by Basuto raids. Eventually the natives were subdued. Only a portion of the conquered territory was annexed, owing to representations of the British Government. No conceivable act could have embittered the Boers more than, as in this case, taking the side of the natives against them. Sir John Brand, who became President of the Free State in 1863, was a most enlightened and far-sighted man. But for the ban by the British Government against the annexation of all the land won from the Basutos, the policy of non-interference was upheld until 1869, when diamonds were discovered. In 1870 the Kimberley Mine was found, and under Sir Henry Barkly British sovereignty was proclaimed over the diamond fields and a large area between the Orange and Vaal Rivers. The province of Griqualand West thus came into existence and was subsequently added to the Cape Colony. This procedure again brought the Imperial Government into conflict with both the Transvaal and Free State Republics, but this time negotiation averted bloodshed by the payment of £100,000 as compensation to the latter State. President Brand

himself went to London and contributed to the peaceful conclusion. The Boers of the northern Republic were not so easily appeased, and their rancour manifested itself in land-grabbing reprisals by the Freebooters, but of those events anon.

Responsible government was bestowed upon the Cape Colony in 1872 and Sir John Molteno became the first Premier. So greatly did the expenditure in developing the diamond fields benefit the revenue of the Colony that, within five years of the first diamond find, railway construction was begun in earnest and the line between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth undertaken.

The Kaffir tribes bordering on the Cape Colony on the eastern side were incessantly fighting each other or invading the white settlements. Gaikas, Galekas, Fingoes, Tembus, Tambookies, and other factions regarded war as the emblem of manhood. The Seventh and Eighth Kaffir Wars against the Europeans took place in 1846-7 and 1851-2 respectively.

Then came a very dramatic incident. A prophetess, named Nongase, predicted that on February 18th, 1857, a hurricane would sweep the earth, the ancestors of the natives would rise with countless herds of cattle and sweep the white men from the land. Incidentally they were also to exterminate the hated Fingo tribe. Such was the faith of the benighted Kaffirs in the witch's prophecy that they destroyed all their live stock and neglected to sow their corn. The result was disastrous. Fifty thousand died of starvation, thirty-four thousand were brought into the Colony

for employment, and many were assisted in their own territories under an organisation set up by the Governor, Sir George Grey. This calamity assuaged the thirst for blood over quite a long period until 1877, when a fresh war broke out, to which I shall refer in due course.

This rapid historical survey is introduced to convey an idea of the conditions prevailing when I arrived at the Cape. It is an inspiring example of human fortitude and, at the same time, a record of gross blunders, of scant justice, and of solid ground for the Dutch hatred and mistrust of Downing Street and British policy. But if the Imperial Government wobbled between Scylla and Charybdis, there was underlying always a benevolent object. Good intentions are said to pave the way to an unholy place, and in statecraft vacillation and flabbiness will ever lead in the same direction. I have not dwelt at length upon the errors of government suffered in no less degree by Britons settled in South Africa than by Boers. From time immemorial the tendency of authorities at home has been to side against their own countrymen in any dispute and to sacrifice them under the erroneous belief that by so doing they could propitiate their enemies.

At one time, under the influence of Exeter Hall, the natives were regarded with particular tenderness by the Colonial Office, and there were many ill-informed people of benign intent who condemned the intrusion of the white man into the black man's country. They did not realise that, but for his advent, South Africa would have become a

veritable wilderness. Not only was the savage love of slaughter insatiable, so that vast areas were depopulated, but his ignorant destruction of the land would have turned it in time into a desert. The male regarded any kind of labour as ignoble. His task in life was to hunt and kill man or beast. The wives, the girls, and the children had to sow and reap the maize or millet grown and to tend the cattle and goats. Their agricultural operations were as wasteful as any upon earth, for, being unversed in the use of the plough, they merely scratched the surface with hoes and soon exhausted its fertility. Then a new area was attacked. The mischief of such a system was bad enough in its rapid destruction of land, but, what was still worse, soil erosion, a most serious consequence, was assisted by it. The disturbed surface, as well as sheep and goat tracks, cause the beginning of dongas, or furrows, ever deepening during the heavy showers of the rainy season, which conduct the cream of the soil into the rivers and on to the ocean. Surface timber, too, amenable to their primitive appliances, was cut down and burnt. Providence often supplies timber in sheltered depressions upon hillsides, and, through the ages, decomposed leaves form a mould that soaks up water like a sponge and delivers it in a small stream afterwards. The removal of that timber is the precursor of a dry furrow and the genesis of desiccation. The Boers themselves were by no means (and in places, I regret to say, still are not) alive to the danger of disregarding nature's penalties for the misuse of nature's gifts. But they would have learnt in time, as they are

learning now. The signal changes in this regard date from the establishment of an Agricultural Department under Lord Milner's progressive régime. The Kaffir, left to himself, would have ever remained the unprogressive savage. Much timber is now being planted, but the immense amount of priceless virgin forest burnt by the Kaffirs and the Boers, damaged by the pernicious practice of veld burning, and sacrificed for the needs of the mines before coal was found, will require years of skilful and zealous work to reproduce and ages of time to mature.

# SOME REMINISCENCES

## CHAPTER I

### EARLY EXPERIENCES

**I** SAILED for South Africa in 1875, being then twenty years of age. Travel by sea in those days was a penance. The ocean liner of to-day, with its spacious decks, swimming-bath, gymnasium, fans and punkahs, electric lights and bells, cool chambers, epicurean cuisine, and higher speed, is in contrast a luxurious palace. Half a century before my day the discomforts were doubtless as much greater relatively as they have been lessened since. But on looking back one is able to appreciate the amazing improvement. Imagine a mail steamer of between seven and eight hundred tons burden, driven by a single propeller, rolling nearly all the time, and pitching horribly in a head sea so that the screw raced. At night, oil lamps, swinging in the saloon with the movement of the ship and emitting fetid odours, at times weeping oil tears upon the tablecloth or anything beneath them. A single and indifferent candle placed in a recess in the alleyway, at the point of partition between two cabins, which were lighted by its dazzling rays through the medium of two panes of

ground glass each about a foot square. At ten o'clock these luminaries were removed, so one had the choice of being in bed or undressing in the dark. Matches, the safety variety not being in general use, and lights in cabins, a source of danger, were taboo. Between the port and starboard alleyways dwelt the saloon where meals were served. I shall never forget the first night. A choppy sea. Most folks, including myself, squeamish, if not prostrated, and those who faced dinner driven from the table by gruesome sounds proceeding from those who had succumbed and retired. The imagination, thus aroused, is apt to disturb one's internal economy by infectious suggestion. The deck above the saloon lighted by one miserable oil lamp. Sea-water for baths plentiful enough, but fresh water a great luxury. Live stock slaughtered on board for fresh food as a treat, and generally very tough; otherwise salted and preserved foods. Horrid butter in tins, nearly always semi-liquid. No apparatus for tempering heat or icy winds. Many days in the tropics. Speed at best ten knots—generally eight or nine—dependent on weather and currents. The travail came to an end in thirty days.

We called at Madeira and St. Helena and everyone went ashore. At Madeira every sort of human deformity thrust under one's notice by beggars—that beautiful island rendered harrowing by their importunities. The parading of such monstrosities has long since been banned. At St. Helena, that grass-clad island revelling in perpetual spring, time permitted an arduous but interesting visit to Longwood, where Napoleon was interned and

died. There one could realise the scourge he must have been for the kind-hearted English nation to have used him so harshly.

In those days sails were hoisted, in favourable winds, to help the engine and steady the ship. I remember once being within fifty miles of St. Helena when our engine broke down. We could not make that port under sail, and the helm was directed to Ascension—a weary six or seven days' voyage. Happily the machinery was repaired in twenty-four hours, so we turned about and reached our goal in due course. Gradually the turbine, with its minimum of vibration, is coming into more general use, and in time the thrust of the reciprocating pistons will be heard and felt no more. Then the throb and shake of those earlier small ships, and the peculiar noises and smells that one could not escape, will be forgotten.

Tales of the sea have been told over and over again, and in these days most folks are familiar with the moods of Neptune, but I may linger for a brief moment upon one or two earlier experiences. Outward bound once on the old *Moor* we encountered stormy weather in the western ocean between Ushant, of ill fame, and Finisterre. I had a deck cabin and was lying in my bunk, sick and sorry for myself. We shipped a big sea that came ploughing along the alleyway. It flooded my cabin to the depth of the guard plank—about one foot. I saw my hat-box and other possessions floating about, but was too indifferent to move for any trifles of that kind. I had a favourite horse on board. His box was stove in and he was killed.

Had I even been aware of the evil done, I doubt whether I should have budged.

On another occasion, too, in that stormy region, we were running before the gale, in the *Dunnottar Castle*, I think. Our speed only just enabled us to outstrip the enraged flood in its pursuit. The captain and officers were anxious because there was serious danger of being "pooped," i.e. overwhelmed from the rear. The vessel was urged to her utmost capacity and held her own. I learnt later that to "go about" in such weather is a precarious performance, hence, in spite of there being some risk in maintaining the course, it was deemed wise to take it. On arrival in England we heard that the Brighton pier had been washed away, and a large vessel, the *Sallier*, had foundered in our neighbourhood that night. I have passed the Bay of Biscay in calm seas more often than not, and sometimes as placid as a village pond. Excitements at sea are uncommon. The spouting of a whale, the sight of a shark, the graceful gambols of porpoises or the leaps of flying fish, with their transparent wings glistening in the sun, are the chief attractions overboard. A passing vessel also arouses interest. Ship-life on the modern liner is full of variety. The spaciousness permits the gratification of different tastes without disturbing passengers otherwise disposed. Anyone embarking on his first trip in these days, assuming that he does not suffer from seasickness, is bound to enjoy the novelty, the fresh air, the entire change of life and surroundings. He can read, play games, or indulge in athletics to his heart's content, and,

if genial in disposition, find pleasure in associating with his fellows. He is free from worry or obligations and can choose his manner of passing the time. How different fifty years ago ! Truly there was novelty, but of a kind one did not relish, for it consisted probably in being less comfortable than before and the restricted space prevented escape from folks one might be glad to avoid. But human beings are so adaptable that day succeeded day in well-ordered routine, and with strange speed. The discomforts soon ceased to be specially noticeable and, before the end of the voyage, being afloat became almost an ordinary normal existence.

In conjuring up that first voyage I find the pleasure outweighs the drawbacks. Of course I was young, which may explain the impressions retained, for in youth resides particular adaptability, but I still see everyone settling down to a delicious period of *dolce far niente* in the soft air of the southern seas, so calming to the nerves, and apparently reconciled to the inconveniences prevailing. Nature is at peace. The heavens, reflecting their depths of blue in the ocean by day, scintillate in myriads of brilliant stars by night. When darkness reigns, the phosphorescent lights hugging the sides of the gliding ship illuminate a narrow track of the black waters. In daytime, too, the snow-white foam rolls away from the intrusive bows in oblique curves to die in the distance. The environment is majestic, entralling. Small wonder that tender feelings blossom like roses in summer-time and invade the receptive breasts of youths and maidens. The officers, too,

in those days mingled far too freely with the passengers and many a susceptible young woman left the vessel with a sore heart. Truths were lightly plighted under those seductive influences, without regard to fitness of qualities for lifelong partnership. The dry-land test should be applied to all promiscs so contracted.

Excluding those in whom the amorous dart had lodged, who no doubt imagined they would like to prolong the voyage for ever, most people welcomed the sight of the coast of Africa. I do not recall the names of those with whom I travelled on that occasion, but think it highly probable we had seen enough of each other, for the moment anyhow. Certainly people become more intimate in a few weeks on board than in years of periodical acquaintance ashore, but, unless they find themselves in particular sympathy, the day of separation is rather a relief than a regret. Besides, most of us were approaching Africa for the first time and were naturally anxious to land, especially as the enchanting panorama stimulated anticipation. The entrance to Table Bay is magnificent, particularly when, as is usual, the brilliant sunlight accentuates the outlines, deepens the shadows, and brings into sharp contrast sea and sky. Behind, the mighty Atlantic, dancing merrily in the south-east trade winds. In front, the clear-cut face of Table Mountain, with its giant summit of rocks drawn in a horizontal line save for one tiny break where the light exposes the head of the gorge. A massive pile flanked on the right by the steep and shapely Lion's Head and on the left by the curves and

krantzes of the Devil's Peak. There is an air of permanency and pervading mystery—a scene at once alluring and forbidding. How well the setting suits the romantic history of the past, gigantic walls of rock towering into the blue heavens seeming to hide and guard the secrets beyond !

Cape Town was then quite the hub of South African culture and development. The city still held many fine buildings constructed during the time of the earlier Dutch governors, when famous architects and skilled craftsmen were brought out from Holland. Notably in the time of Willem Adriaan van der Stel fine work was done in building, in arboriculture, and in the study of plant life suitable to the soil. The love of beauty does not appear to have persisted, and, but for protests in my own day, scarcely a fine piece of architecture would survive. The picturesque Malay costumes encountered commonly in the seventies are now practically extinct, save upon special festive occasions. The hotels were primitive in the last degree, but the food was good, as the Dutch had brought many recipes from the East. The service was execrable.

My destination was Kimberley. The railway terminus was Wellington, only forty-five miles from the capital. Six hundred miles had to be traversed by road. The transport service by coach had broken down and the only method of travel was the mule wagon. Some of the diggers, dissatisfied with the Government, had raised the Black Flag of revolt. An Irishman named Aylward, a Fenian, was a prime mover who led astray

many a good fellow like Henry Tucker. The Twenty-fourth Regiment, under Colonel (afterwards General) Glyn, was sent up to quell the disturbance. The late General Carrington was then a subaltcrn. A party of about eight of us went up in their company. We had a wagon drawn by fourteen mules. One or two women were of the party, and they slept in the tent of the wagon. We slept on the ground under its shelter. Having had no experience of the sort, it took me some time to learn the ropes. On the first night out it rained, and, as I write, I can feel the cold stream running down my back !

The plains stretching from Cape Town to Wellington and on to the mountain barrier carry a very fertile soil and have become the centre of the grain and fruit industry of a large area, ineluding Malmesbury, Tulbagh, Ceres, Worcester, the Hex River Valley, and many other localities. We crossed the mountains over Baynes Kloof, a fine rugged pass, and soon found ourselves in the depths of the Karoo—a Hottentot word meaning a dry place. I should hate to live in that arid semi-desert, but for some people it has a strange fascination and they love it.

The climate is superb. Excepting upon rare cloudy days, there is, throughout the year, a hot sun, the intense rays of which are tempered by the desiccated air. Nights always cool and bitterly cold in winter. Wonderful sunsets casting ravishing lights and shades upon the ranges of hills, clear cut, even when distant, in the crystal air. Unbelievable colouring and most deceptive mir-

ages, where phantom lakes bordered by shapely trees flatter the senses and must have lured many a thirsty soul from his path. Such rainfall as the region enjoys—about 5 to 10 inches per annum—comes in capricious showers. I have seen the parched surface in a few minutes submerged by a sudden downpour. In lucky seasons glorious little flowers adorn the whole earth ; they spring up almost overnight. At such moments one cannot imagine the normal state. Usually Karoo bushes, a few inches high, separated by patches of red earth, constitute the vegetation and afford splendid nutriment to sheep, but it takes four acres to feed one animal. And that is not all, for, in the days of which I am writing, boreholes and windmills had not been introduced. It was, therefore, most dangerous to stock heavily for fear of severe drought diminishing the food supply and possibly exterminating a large part of the flock from thirst. Even now, with underground water available, farmers often have to slaughter their lambs in the effort to save as many sheep as possible by *trekking* away to a less stricken area.

The soil, being unleached, is extremely rich in chemical constituents and, with water, almost everything grows luxuriantly. Even in those days there were dams here and there, places where at a modest cost some of the capricious rainfall could be stored. The Karoo at one time was the home of vast herds of game and must have been far better watered. The surface is usually hard and is riddled by numberless water-courses and river-beds, generally dry. During storms they become rushing torrents which carry

away to the ocean vast quantities of priceless soil. The discovery and development of the diamond and gold fields have, with the access of enterprising people, wrought a great change in the Karoo, and conservation works of importance have been built, notably the Britstown scheme, initiated by the Right Honourable Sir Thomas Smartt, present Minister of Agriculture in the Union. Gradually many a *poort*<sup>1</sup> in the hills is being dammed and advantage is being taken by farmers of smaller sites for water storage. The plains are so great that the catchment areas discharge considerable volumes of water even from moderate storms and conservation is of vital importance, not only for the precious water, but as a means of lessening the erosion of good soil. I must not, however, digress into a discussion of this important subject.

Weeks were spent by us toiling along in the parched Karoo with our party of soldiers. Day succeeded day in almost identical scenery until, after travelling over five hundred miles, we reached the Orange River (in which there is in the driest season some water to be found) and encountered the first running stream. Here the country is broken into many, mostly low, hills smothered with boulders, of menacing aspect and radiating during sunshine fierce heat. In that neighbourhood is a stretch of deep red sand, about five miles across. Never shall I forget the struggle in that fearsome place. It was trying to a light man on foot, for one sunk at each step inches into the yielding grains. What it was for the poor mules is better

<sup>1</sup> A narrow passage in the hills through which floods escape.

imagined than described. The panting animals, cruelly and almost incessantly flogged, straining every nerve to drag the wagon along, loaded with their food and our effects, emitted sounds scarcely distinguishable from groans, which made one's heart bleed. Here and there isolated blades of grass could be seen, altogether ineffective in binding the loose particles together. As far as the eye could reach, left and right were tracks essayed by previous travellers. Such was the "road," and happily I have never traversed it by means of animal transport since. I have forgotten whether we crossed the river by the drift or by the pontoon, used when the depth was too great. In times of flood the Orange River is a mighty force. I was once held up there for ten days, and finally got across in a stout rowing-boat pulled by four natives. The middle of the torrent was black with trees torn from sparsely wooded banks possibly hundreds of miles away. We began the passage by pulling up-stream for about half an hour, then put the bow across, dodged the timber avalanche, and finally reached the opposite bank a mile or so below our starting-point. The wagon crossed days later.

North of the river the Karoo bush gradually gives place to a grass country, but the vegetation is straggling and, although it improves beyond Kimberley towards the Vaal River, one has to cross into the Transvaal to reach a more hospitable verdure.

On moonlit nights we used to do a good deal of travelling, but generally we trekked by day and the mules were tethered to the *disselboom* at night.

How they revelled in a good roll and a sand bath when they were outspanned ! Walking alone one night in front of the wagon, I was suddenly chilled by a piercing howl fairly near me. It was the most melancholy note I had ever heard, like a chorus of dogs baying the moon. My first impulse was to bolt back to the wagon as fast as my legs could carry me, but I restrained myself, fearing I should be laughed at. I had not previously heard the hyena, a loathsome, cowardly beast never known to attack a man.

We carried our food supplies with us, but sometimes halted at a homestead, where the greatest hospitality was given to travellers. I cannot pay too high a tribute to the Boers, who, in those days, welcomed the stranger and offered him freely the best of their meagre larders. That was before the roads became congested and the ill-bred multitude that swarmed up to the El Dorado invaded the modest homes and laughed at the primitive habits of the kind occupants. That was the initial cause of personal unfriendliness and the closed doors that followed later on.

After thirty-five days of this toil we reached Kimberley and camped for the night upon a ridge overlooking the camp. We fully expected a sanguinary assault next day, but emissaries were sent out with a flag of truce, the ringleaders surrendered, and the troops were regaled at luncheon on the Market Square.

So ended the rebellion. Death sentences were pronounced but no one was severely punished, and the camp soon forgot all about the trouble.

I took up my appointment with Mr. (now Sir) Joseph Robinson. He was a diamond buyer and claim owner. My function was to sort diamonds and keep the accounts, for which I had had some training. My employer had built the one and only brick house in the camp, and there my home was established. There were still considerable areas covered by tents, and in a windstorm at night (not a very frequent occurrence) I have seen several literally blown away from their moorings, the unhappy owners still lying on their stretchers. Gradually tents, whose shape permitted, were propped up inside with timber. Then came the frame house, a square structure, with pitched roof, made of light pine and covered with canvas. Luxurious people had a "fly," or extra canvas covering, that rested on the ridge and was held down on either side by ropes pegged to the ground, leaving an air-space between it and the roof. This device modified extremes of heat and cold. When the canvas became thin from wear and tear, the framework was covered with galvanised iron and a few extra sheets of iron protruded from the side of the building at its junction with the roof, supported by poles at the outer edge and forming a verandah. Such was the evolution of the iron house. Small, sun-dried bricks were, at a later stage, built inside the walls and ceilings were boarded, which added greatly to comfort. The place was growing apace.

Water, obtained solely from wells, was frightfully scarce. We were driven at times to wash in an expensive bottle of soda-water, and baths were a

rare luxury. Men used to ride to the Modder River, which generally harboured a few pools even in the dry season, or to the Vaal River, roughly twenty miles distant, for a thorough cleansing. The camp was probably saved from serious attacks of typhoid by the dryness of the climate and the disinfecting power of the dusty veld, with which most things were usually smothered. In the early, very dry, and hot summer, when black clouds would pile up, we all used to gaze into the sky, longing for moisture. Suddenly, generally in the afternoon, violent dust-storms would spring up and sweep the clouds away. At night then the air became cold and the heavens sparkled with stars, seemingly close at hand. Not a vestige even of fleecy vapour remained, just a brilliant canopy.

Those dust-storms were wonderful. In a perfectly still air one could see a distant wall rise far away on the plain. In a few minutes it would be on us with a roar, darkening everything, filling one's eyes, nose, and ears, stinging one's face, forcing one to turn one's back upon it. Usually in ten or fifteen minutes the hurricane swept by, but it left behind gritty mouths, gritty food, and a thin layer of fine dust on everything. The streets were swept bare—a veritable scavenger. Often sheets of galvanised iron were torn from roofs or verandahs and hurled about like leaves of paper, to the peril of the passer-by. Wonderful whirlwinds frequently rose at that season. Without any apparent reason, a small pillar of dust, revolving at high speed, would come into being, growing in dimensions as it gained momentum,

and carrying upwards in its gyrations anything in the shape of old tins or other similar unattached articles in its path. The column would rise high above the earth and travel on its giddy course without any apparent cause, for it was surrounded by still air, finally dying down from sheer exhaustion.

Speaking about whirlwinds, a friend of mine, Mr. F. T. Gervers, had a curious experience in his office whilst sorting diamonds. In those rough days an office consisted only of canvas stretched over a wooden frame, the whole space measuring not more than 15 feet by 10 and some 10 feet in height. Gervers was in his little office one beautiful day, the heat being so intense that he sat only in the lightest of clothes, with even his socks off, and the door wide open, when a whirlwind entered the open door and lifted the whole office some 10 feet into the air ! He remained sitting, but the diamonds were scattered all over the sandy floor and the day's work resulted in some hundred pounds' loss, to say nothing about one of the socks, which he last saw floating heavenwards in the spiral column of the unwelcome intruder !

The rainfall at Kimberley is very meagre and comes, as in the Karoo, mostly in violent showers. When I went there, fresh vegetables were unobtainable. We lived upon meat chiefly—tinned sausage, fish, soups, etc., compressed vegetables, like cakes of tobacco, that expanded to some extent in water and generally tasted nauseous. I remember a solitary cabbage fetching thirty shillings in the morning market.

The community was overwhelmingly male and mostly young. Drink was rather a curse and most of us consumed more than was good for us. A friend of mine, the son of an admiral, was unfortunately addicted to drink. One day he said, "You will be glad to hear I have given up drink." I congratulated him heartily. Within half an hour I saw him, to my surprise and disgust, swallowing a brandy-and-soda. I asked what he meant by telling me he had given up drink. He replied, "Oh ! I meant 'Cape Smoke'!" That vile distillate was very cheap. French brandy was an expensive luxury in which he could indulge only rarely and with great restraint !

The mention of drink reminds me of excitements due to what became known as "canteen rushes." In those days everyone had visions of finding and possessing a mine, and rumours of new discoveries were as common as wild stories of victories or disasters in time of war, or tales of lurid events in time of civil commotion. Enterprising and unscrupulous vendors of spirits sometimes invented a "new" rush. Out flocked diggers to the site indicated, with a prospecting outfit. Sometimes diamondiferous-looking ground was actually to be seen, in which case the yarns about rich finds were amazing, but some craters, with all the apparent characteristics, yielded no diamonds, while others, where a miserable stone or two had been found, were too poor in yield to be worked. By the time the diggers proved the fraud, all the liquor had been sold out at ruinous prices, to the enrichment of the vendor (who departed with his ill-gotten

spoils) and the impoverishment in pocket, as well as detriment to the health, of the unfortunate dupes. Epidemics of these “new fields” broke out from time to time, but ultimately that kind of villainy became too dangerous to practise as the liquor seller was “suspect” and, if discovered, had a rough time.

As regards dress, a pair of trousers and a shirt without collar or tie, with sleeves rolled up, a wide-brimmed felt hat, and a broad piratical belt with pockets to hold money, diamonds, etc., were *de rigueur*.

A time of excitement and hope. The Market Square, a huge quadrangle, was a fine sight in those days. Dozens of wagons, mostly drawn by long teams of oxen, some laden with firewood and produce from distant farms, some with structural timber, galvanised iron, steel wire for gears, pumps, household utensils, and all the paraphernalia necessary for a town and industry in the making, were drawn up in well-ordered ranks, having often travelled hundreds of miles. Diminutive piccanninies, used on trek as leaders of the oxen, played about in the dust, and the transport riders gathered about in groups, discussing the roads, the prospects, and the general affairs of the country. A motley throng, with diggers, merchants, dealers, and others interspersed, in fact the hub of the camp, where distribution, fresh engagements, and bargains were arranged and general news, information, and marvellous tales of all sorts were circulated.

The output from the famous Kimberley and

De Beers mines soon grew, attracted a greater and greater population, and caused the building of more substantial offices and dwellings. Shops increased and respectability asserted itself in the appearance of coats—even black ones for Sunday. The natives were clad in nothing but a waistband supporting a few rags to hide their nakedness. Apeing our example, they soon acquired a taste for dress, but most incongruous in conception and effect. In those days discarded uniforms were sold to anyone, and it was not uncommon to see a black brother with the primitive apparel referred to and a coat of some glorious regiment superimposed. Maybe the toilet was set off by a paper collar round his bare neck held together by a piece of thread. Ladies of sable hue affected an attire of beads, quite decent and very picturesque.

For some years after the opening of Colesburg Kopje, as the Kimberley Mine was called by its discoverers in honour of the town from which they hailed, the natives who offered their services as labourers were quite raw; their acquaintance with implements was limited to the hoe. What pathetic specimens of savage manhood used to seek work in those days! They came sometimes hundreds of miles on foot to the scene of industry, and on arrival were usually living skeletons. They had never seen a pick or a shovel and had to be fed up before their initiation in the use of those instruments could begin. Real savages in all respects, with a tremendous reverence for the white man, who, in their eyes, could do everything except tie up the sun! That limitation of the

white man's power was often hurled at the overseer's head in summer time, but otherwise the poor benighted creatures had an inordinate respect for us and were quite abject in attitude, an inherited legacy, perhaps, from the slave-days. They took everything as it came philosophically. I remember seeing a neighbour one morning whipping every one of his boys as they started work, and, in reply to my question as to his reason, he said, "If they don't want it now, they will!" In his case the punishment was not severe, just a reminder, but the mere action gives an idea of those times.

The natives coming to the mines were then mostly Beehuanas and Basutos from various parts, with a few from the Transkeian Territories. Bushmen, Hottentots, and Griquas did not care for mining work. They mostly worked on farms, with animals, and in transport work. How clever those tribes are in the veld! Their powers of sight and hearing are far more acute than ours and their reecollection of country surprising. The last-mentioned tribes rank lower anthropologically than the Kaffir. The Bushman is almost extinct. He may be classed as the lowest type of human being in South Africa, and yet is brave as a hunter, artful in stalking and trapping animals, and the inventor of arrows with highly poisonous tips. He has all the attributes of the wild man—small in stature, treacherous and cunning. In a lesser degree the Hottentot and the Griqua, a slightly higher type, resemble them in attributes. How different from the dignified fighting tribes like the

Zulu, the true Basuto, and the Colonial Kaffirs, who, in turn, in my early days challenged the white man's supremacy. Those greater tribes did not then come out to work. They hunted, preyed on each other, and lived on their own produce, suffering terribly withal in periods of drought and famine.

What a transformation to-day ! Natives come from remote districts to work at the mines and industrial centres. But a recruiting system has been introduced and perfected. Rest-houses and food are provided, and the natives arrive in good health and well nourished. No one dreams of administering corporal punishment now. Most of the natives are acquainted with work, all in the use of simple implements, and many have a practical experience of pumps, engines, ploughs, and other appliances. Their education has advanced prodigiously. The old days of the soldier's discarded coat and the paper collar have gone. In those days natives sometimes had a great fancy for umbrellas, and I have seen them shading themselves from the oppressive rays on a moonlit night ! And when they left the scene of their labour and took a present home to their favourite wife, it consisted, of course, of the umbrella and probably of a tin box in which I suspect she had nothing to deposit. Now, with the advance of civilisation, they take back smart pieces of stuff, marvellous blankets, and, for aught I know, cheap jewellery. The old picturesque costumes are disappearing, and in the big towns one sees male and female natives dressed in the latest fashions, usually of the flashiest kind. Inter-

course with white men of the lower classes has not improved their opinion of us all round and they are far less respectful than of yore. There is, however, a natural dignity about the Kaffir and he is quick to recognise a gentleman. During the Great War I was asked to see that they were being properly treated in France. Our Tommies were inclined to regard them as "gollywogs" to be played with at one moment and kicked the next. I made some suggestions in this and other directions which I trust were useful.

The power of the native chiefs, which was despotic years ago, has now been so reduced that it can be exercised only in minor matters and in a strictly limited degree. The magistrates and sub-native commissioners actually rule the natives and do so with great fairness, kindness, and success. Even in my day, chiefs like Ketchwayo and Lo Bengula had power over the lives and property of all their subjects and were guided in their actions rather by their cupidity, their moods, or the expediency of a given line of procedure, than by the merits of the particular case. Still, the natives were generally quite loyal to the chief—whether this was attributable to affection or fear I hesitate to say. A native to whom I spoke on the subject once claimed himself to govern because he elected the chief! Khama, the Bechuana chief, was a notable example of a monarch who studied the welfare of his people and was scrupulous in dispensing justice among them. Tribal cohesion used to be extremely strong and even petty chiefs waged war on one another with impunity. The paramount chief probably

regarded such miniature battles as a means of preventing any inordinate growth of population and a school for martial ardour. Nowadays the white man's government would intervene the moment any tribal fracas began. What effect the lessening of tribal patriotism may have has yet to be demonstrated. Should Zulus and Basutos cease to hate each other, and the various offshoots of those great Bantu nations, of which the names are legion, become fraternal in their mutual relations, the effect may be serious for us. Religion, too, which claims in reality a mere fraction of the native population, may, if any particular form becomes generally adopted, prove a mighty bond. Mohammedanism is, I am told, making rapid strides from north to south. A simple fanatical faith would make a strong appeal to the barbarous intellect.

In my day at Kimberley and for years on the gold mines (especially before liquor prohibition was actively enforced) tribal fights on the mines took place practically every week-end. While Frank Spencer and I were contracting in Bultfontein Mine we had a small house in Du Toit's Pan near our works. One night a more than usually fierce combat was raging between our "boys" and a neighbouring employer's gang. We were told that our stables were in danger and had to proceed to the area of strife. I don't remember how my friend was armed, but I had a poker in one hand and a revolver in the other. Stones and bottles were flying about and every native had a stick of some sort. We rushed in

and I used my poker pretty freely, but such was our prestige in those days that, the moment we were recognised, our Kaffir names were shouted out and the tumult died away in a very few minutes. Tackling such situations was always a nasty, perilous job, and I do not believe two white men to-day could undertake it. The police would have to be sent for. To a native then every white man was an *inkoos*—a chief. The communistic spirit was then absolute, as indeed it can only be with savages. On pay-day one Saturday I decided to give every Kaffir who had done a good week's work an extra half-crown. The number of boys so rewarded was naturally limited. Within ten minutes of concluding the pay my office was besieged. Every native claimed the extra half-crown. I explained that it was the reward of specially good work. They replied at once, “If those boys did more than we, they did a little work for us !”

I will not describe in detail the growth of the industry and the place, because anyone seriously interested should refer for that information to the monumental work of Gardner F. Williams entitled *The Diamond Mines of South Africa*. My object is to recall affairs and incidents with which I was identified.

I proceeded to sort diamonds, classifying them in their various qualities (not always to my employer's satisfaction), and to keep the books. Suddenly my patron took it into his head to buy a newspaper, *The Independent* by name. He nominated me as publisher. I knew nothing of that pro-

fession and was indeed a dummy. Journalism was not at that time on a high plane, but I confess now, and not without blushing, that I contributed articles in prose and verse sometimes. I am glad I never kept the printed results, of which I was possibly proud at the time. Our editor was J. Mortimer Siddell, a lawyer by profession. That did not prevent him from writing a terribly defamatory article about Sir Owen Lanyon—the Lieutenant-Governor. He admitted the authorship and was arrested instead of me. That experience caused me to decline further responsibility unless I was endowed with control. My chief by that time had acquired more claims and was less interested in the diamond business. He invited me to go into the mines and supervise the operations. I naturally jumped at the offer. I was still a stripling, perhaps about twenty-two years old, and had no knowledge of practical work. There were two hefty Irishmen, O'Mally and Birmingham by name, running the concern. They were men of the working class, very fond of a "skinful" and a bout too on a Saturday night; frequently they bore evidence of it on a Monday. They treated me kindly (almost paternally) and we were soon on good terms, though O'Mally confided to me at a later date, when I understood matters and really took command, that upon my appearing at the mine for the first time he had said to Birmingham, "Who is this kid sent here to look after us?"

I should perhaps here explain that diamond mining in those days was anything but scientific. The volcanic mud containing the gems was decom-

posed to varying depths from the surface and was then yellow in colour. At that date the "blue" or non-decomposed material had not been reached. As a matter of fact there was a panic among the claim-holders when it was struck, as it was suspected to be the bottom of the mine. On striking it men frequently covered up the ominous exposure hastily and rushed to town to sell their claims. Some venturesome sportsman decided to test the "bottom" and found it still held diamonds. That, of course, restored confidence. We had nothing but yellow to work, and it was easily won. We used a little black powder to shake an area, but no high explosives were required. Prior to the discovery of the volcanic pipes in Griqualand West, diamonds had been found only in alluvial gravels, so the method of extraction had to be invented. At the beginning the ground was passed through sieves of various sizes and sorted dry. Under this method many diamonds were lost. Then a small rocking machine was designed, with sieves inside through which the material was passed by aid of a stream of water. The stones and heavier deposit were retained, and at the next stage rotary machines, driven first by hand and later, as they became larger, by horse power, were installed. These appliances were gradually developed and held the field for many years, steam power being substituted for animals in due course.

Similarly, in the mines themselves, at first the diamond-bearing ground was loaded into carts *in situ*, roads being left between a row of claims on either side for the carts to travel on. Soon, of

course, the depth of the claims rendered the roads unsafe, in addition to which nearly half the mine was occupied by them and unworkable in consequence. Then came the days of aerial tramways. A standing wire was anchored in the claim, and on the surface it was fixed to a staging. A small bucket made of oxhide travelled up and down this standing wire on runners affixed to a hauling line, which was raised or lowered by a wheel or drum turned by hand. Then as the depth and size of apparatus increased, whims turned by horses were substituted. Two standing wires took the place of one, and a bucket slung in a frame on four grooved wheels made its appearance. Steam in time ousted the horse. Here is the evolution without too much descriptive detail. The machinery gradually became important and many innovations were introduced—all of which were invented on the spot. It was a fine training for men with a mechanical bent, as so little professional skill was available in the early days.

During the first five years or so of my management I learnt a good deal and became a handy man: I could splice a wire, drive a winding engine at a pinch (generally when the man in charge was tipsy and had to be suddenly dispensed with), sharpen a pick or a drill, set up a hauling gear (and in time the steel standing wires became long and thick and to avoid kinks needed skilful handling) and trim down a wall, as it was called. If one worked one's claim deeper than one's neighbour's, one had to be careful not to encroach over one's boundary. Accurate surveying was essential,

and "trimming the wall" meant standing on a rough ledge (left to avert encroachment) and removing it with a small sharp pick so as to leave the neighbouring claim standing vertically above like the wall of a house. In doing this delicate work I lost my balance one day and fell about 12 feet, spraining my right wrist badly. I had it in a leather band for a couple of years and it has never quite regained its power.

Tremendous disputes arose about diamonds found in this trimming process, especially about large and valuable stones (if the neighbour heard of them), and boundary testing was frequently resorted to. I remember being appointed to arbitrate in one of those cases and, as the evidence was very conflicting, ordered the diamond to be sold and the proceeds divided. The verdict was, I think, fair, but the disputants, by that time red-hot in their respective pretensions, were most voluble in their dissent. Politeness and the suppression of one's feelings were not a distinguishing feature of those days, which were nevertheless entrancing. The gloriously healthy climate filled our young, well-trained bodies with a *joie de vivre* indescribable. We worked by the sun, fourteen hours in that blazing orb at mid-summer, decreasing to ten hours on the shortest day in winter. The nights were nearly always fresh and cool. In winter, however, they were bitterly cold from sundown until, say, ten o'clock next day, when the sun made itself felt. By midday, even at that season, it was quite hot. It could be so cold that I often wrapped a piece of sacking round the stirrup irons to save my feet

from frostbite. We heartily enjoyed every moment of those active days, in which brain and body worked at concert pitch. One felt a sense of daily accomplishment, exhilarating to any right-minded being.

As the huge quarry became deeper, the enclosing rocks, basaltic in places, but commonly sedimentary shales, became fully defined excepting at the extreme west end where the yield was poor, too poor to pay expenses. We used to run about the shelving sides, almost precipitous in places, like so many chamois. As time went on I had four separate blocks of ground under my control. Towards the west end, where the Crystal Company was formed (so named on account of the fine quality of the diamonds), I had worked the claims down from the grass roots. The margin of profit was slight, as was the yield per load, but the market value of our product fluctuated greatly and at times we did well. The other claims of which I had charge were situated in a more productive part of the mine.

The exposed walls of the quarry soon began to weather, crumble, and give way. When these symptoms appeared, we used to make the particular place safe. The effect of exposing a large area, however, standing up at a steep angle and in parts almost perpendicular, soon manifested itself in the appearance of cracks on the surface some feet back from the margin of the mine. At first these fissures remained apparently stationary, but imperceptibly they opened, and the pace of movement became accelerated as the crack widened. Finally the detached mass gave way and thousands

of tons fell into the depths below. A big fall of reef was an awe-inspiring sight. Along the towering face at various points little spurts of rock broke away, increasing rapidly in number and quantity during the next hour or so. The gaps between the solid ground and the doomed section increased visibly as one watched, and the gigantic body rolled over, crashed, and, like an enormous tidal wave, swept away everything in its path.

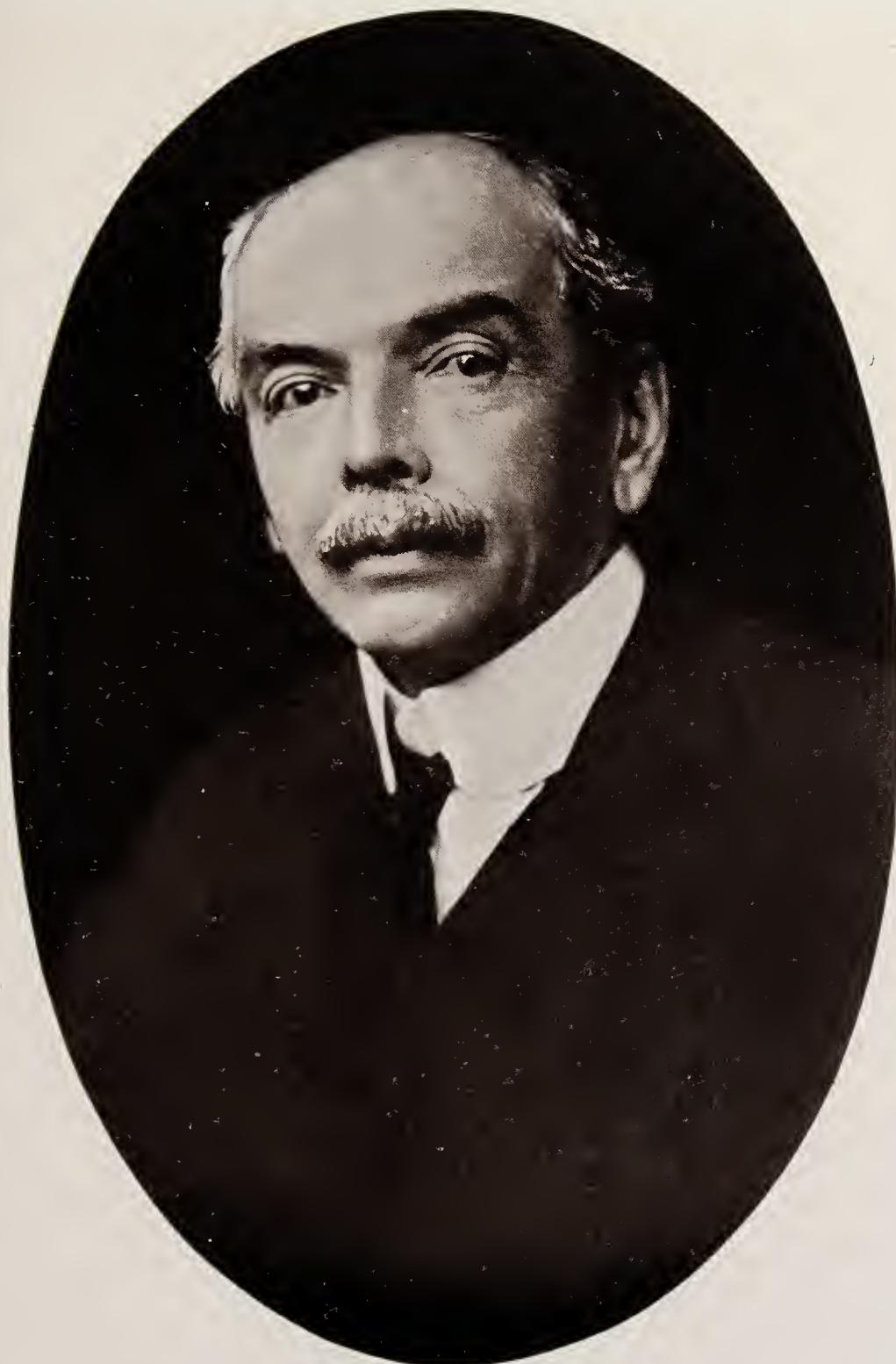
No lives were ever lost owing to the great falls of reef, as we were prepared for them. Men were occasionally killed or maimed by a single stone becoming dislodged above and catching them in its descent. A very simple method enabled us to guard against surprise from important falls. Directly a surface crack made its appearance, two sticks of timber, laid side by side, were placed across it, the one weighted down on the solid, the other on the suspect, section. The crack was marked by pencil lines. Observation every week at first, then more frequently, told the tale. Near the time of collapse the gauges might separate an inch in a day.

Falls of reef were not the only objects of attention. In the diamondiferous soil itself there were far more dangerous, and generally invisible, features. During the original upheaval, the volcanic mud, in cooling, moved somewhat and left burnished contacts between great masses. These were termed greasy slides, and if one tapped one of those blocks at the base it might slip down without warning. Most of the lives lost in my day were due to that cause.

One morning, riding up to our west-end ground, I saw all our standing wires were slack. I raced up to the point of vantage, conscious of the probable cause. Hundreds of tons of ground had given way. The situation below was appalling. Most of our men had jumped down into the claims next to ours—60 feet below. I will not describe the havoc. It took hours to get the dead and injured to the surface. To be a manager under such harrowing circumstances is indeed an ordeal.

One miraculous escape lingers in my memory. A young fellow employed at the signal bell was paralysed with fright. His limbs refused to move. There he stood, as I reached him, pale and motionless but untouched, surrounded by enormous blocks of ground, each many tons in weight.

The Craven Club was the hub of social life in those days; after sundown everyone used to meet there, and it was there that I saw a good deal of Rhodes and Jameson, Tarry, Rudd, Beit, and heaps of other men, many of whom became well known, who used to forgather within those friendly portals. Rhodes came out for his health, a lean, lank, loose-limbed youth. He had a pumping contract with Rudd and soon began to buy a claim or so. He flitted off to Oxford to pass exams and finally take his degree at Oriel. He was very talkative and had an inquisitive turn of mind. That was, of course, before he became a wealthy and ultimately a great man. No one suspected his future. We were all on a footing of equality in those days, and sorted ourselves out according to taste and not position. Rhodes and Jameson were



*Photo by]*

[*Elliott & Fry.*

THE RIGHT HON. SIR LEANDER STARR JAMESON, BART., C.B. (LONDON, 1910).



both rather cynical in their estimation of their fellow-men, but how far they really thought that everyone "had his price," or merely posed that way, it is difficult to say. I generally got on well with Rhodes and, like almost everyone else, loved Jameson, who was excellent company and had an adorable disposition. Tremendously trusted as a medical man, he loved a joke, a gamble, or an escapade, and, though he would inveigh against patients for disturbing him at night, often needlessly, he always answered a call, and I am sure was tender-hearted in distressing cases.

I can see in the mirror of recollection the men one knew in those days—hardy diggers like Tom Wood, Joe Denys, Frank Spencer, Jack Halifax, Baring Goold, Atkins, Compton, the Newberrys, Octavius James Skill, Fred Worsley, pugnacious little Rickman, and many more: the late Francis Oats, the mining inspector (afterwards Chairman of De Beers), Digby Willoughby (afterwards "Prime Minister" to Queen Ranavola of Madagascar), Gunn of Gunn, a mysterious individual who had "six hunters eating their heads off" in his stables at home (but I do not know whether he ever went there), "Mad" Owen, a gallant adventurer of whom tales of daring and foolhardiness were legion, Tim Tyson, a *gourmet* who had always something tasty to eat in his pocket, Graham, Prince, Somerschield, Ramsay, a shrewd Scotsman who is still alive and active, Wallis, Wallace, and a host of others too numerous to name or to be of special interest to the general reader to-day.

In those days there were no men of leisure at

Kimberley. The community was young, active, and strong, every member bent upon carving out for himself a successful career. And what a spirit of hope and confidence pervaded ! What gaiety met the checks, hardships, and absence of comfort or distractions outside work ! But when men have their heart in their work, they are blissfully content. We had lots of jokes and fun of a rough sort. Rhodes was the hero of many a quaint *faux pas*, two or three of which I will quote to throw a light upon his mentality.

One day in the club the French habit of gesticulating came under discussion. Blunt as usual, Rhodes declared it to be absurd. A Frenchman present retorted that, were he of that nationality, he would understand it. Quick as lightning Rhodes replied, "No doubt a monkey in a monkey-house thinks himself a fine fellow." Outraged at the brutality of the comparison, the Frenchman turned his back and walked away. Rhodes had no intention of being rude, so ran after him and said, "Three of my aunts married Frenchmen." A queer form of apology (and, I think, not strictly true), but it served.

Another instance, in which my friend Mr. Edward Birkenruth, now a Director of the Consolidated Goldfields, was concerned, had much the same flavour. He took Rhodes to see a picture sent to him from home. Asked for his opinion, Rhodes bluntly replied, "Daub." "My brother, the artist, sent it to me," said Birkenruth. "Just like a brother," answered the future Colossus ; "he could not sell it, so he gave it to you."

Rhodes was greatly attached to Colonel (afterwards Sir Hamilton) Goold Adams, and the following incident took place at his own table. Goold Adams was staying with him. Rhodes had a very poor opinion of army officers, and showed by the terms of his will the depth of his convictions by debarring his heirs from adopting that profession. He was frequently addicted to raising the subject, and always in disparaging terms. Upon the occasion in question he had been more vehement than usual, and Goold Adams tolerated the onslaught for a while, but, as the invective grew positively offensive, he rose from the table and left the house. Rhodes jumped up, pursued and caught him, and then delivered himself of this cryptic utterance, "Don't be a fool, Goold. Have I not got five brothers in the army?" That was true, more or less. Goold Adams, subsequently Lieutenant-Governor of the Orange River Colony, was a splendid man and a good sportsman.

In the early days John X. Merriman came up to Kimberley with a premature but talented scheme of amalgamation on which I reported to Rhodes. This may have been the germ from which subsequent events grew. But I shall touch upon the subject of consolidation later on. I do not recollect the exact date of this incident, but it was in the latter part of the seventies.

## CHAPTER II

### MORE OF THE EL DORADO

**S**HAKESPEARE'S dictum that "there is a tide in the affairs of man which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune" is not open to dispute. Few of us can honestly say that we ever recognised the flood tide. We base our actions upon our estimate of probabilities. Our judgment is sometimes right and sometimes wrong. I suppose the successful are more often right than wrong. But, given average intelligence and energy, fate, chance, or circumstance has surely a greater weight than our own perceptions. At the period of my own career to which we have now come my little barque came near to being wrecked. I missed the flood tide, or it swept out so swiftly into a stormy sea that my craft was perilously near destruction.

After being in the Kimberley Mine about eight years I had decided to go home, when my friend Henry Boyd Wallis, who worked a block of ground at Dutoitspan in partnership with Mr. J. B. Robinson, asked me to take his place for a year and let him go to England to join his wife and family. I was on intimate terms with all of them, and, being a bachelor, had no great objection to deferring my departure. I therefore became Managing Director

of the Griqualand West Diamond Mining Company. I suffered much subsequently for being an obliging person, and an incautious one too, as it turned out. I took it for granted that all was well at that property, and did not examine it until I took over. Then, to my disgust, I found they had worked out their yellow ground and were in the blue. This necessitated an entire change of plant. Yellow ground could be treated directly it reached the surface ; the blue had to be spread out upon depositing floors and weathered. Mechanical pulverisation, in common use to-day, by which the hard rock could be treated forthwith, was not then invented. But apart from mechanical crushing, other requisite appliances for treating the hard blue had not been provided. I installed a plant at a cost of about £40,000—and am convinced it was as efficient as any other of that day. The Company had 5,000 reserve shares of £10 each which could have been sold in the market at £11 10s. Having erected the machinery and incurred the debt referred to, I urged the sale of enough reserve shares to wipe it off. My advice was not accepted, on the ground that the shares were expected to rise a good deal higher. Having completed a most arduous year's service and Wallis having returned, I resigned my appointment, receiving warm letters of thanks and appreciation from the Board of Directors. I proceeded to take my deferred holiday. I little suspected the calamity in store for me, but before recording that period of distress, I must recount two incidents that occurred during my year at Dutoitspan. The first caused

a breach in my friendly relations with Rhodes. The following are the facts.

Elections were in prospect for the Cape House of Assembly, and, for business reasons, probably to advance the scheme he had in mind for amalgamating the diamond mines, Rhodes agreed to support a candidate for the Kimberley seat of whom I did not approve. I was fairly well known, and Rhodes asked me to use my influence and to speak in the interest of his nominee. Although he had not then reached the pinnacle of his wealth or fame, his position was far superior to mine. Still, I could not bring myself to betray the convictions I had on the subject, and I refused to act. As usual when thwarted, he was very much put out and, I thought, aggressive in his attitude. I stuck to my guns and, although I did not oppose, neither supported nor voted for his man. In due course the election took place, and, with the De Beers' following, Rhodes' candidate had a large majority. I met Rhodes within half an hour of the closing of the poll, and he said, "You did not vote." I replied that I had told him I should abstain. He reminded me that I lived by the industry. That speech annoyed me. I did not consider my employment affected my political freedom. We had an argument none too pleasant, and in consequence he did not speak to me for a month or so. Jameson eventually asked us to dine and healed the little rift in our relations, which had always been cordial without being particularly close. As a matter of fact, Rhodes was a big and not an ungenerous-minded man, and my attitude did me



*Photo by]*

[W. & D. Downey.

THE RIGHT HON. C. J. RHODES, P.C. (LONDON, 1895).



no real harm in his esteem, as will appear in due course.

Another incident, which gave me my first acquaintance with labour troubles and mob violence, took place while I was at Dutoitspan. Diamond stealing had always been a scourge. Natives were adepts at the game, and, when they saw a diamond in breaking or shovelling ground in the mine, they put their foot upon it, picked it up between their toes, and, at a moment when the overseer happened to be looking elsewhere, put it in their mouths and swallowed it. That source of loss was minimised by the introduction of the compound system, when effective measures for countering this crime were devised. But all the white overseers were not proof against the temptation, and it became generally known that quite a considerable quantity of diamonds, mostly of fair size and good quality, found their way into the illicit dealers' hands through them.

On occasions I accompanied Detectives Fox or Izdebski on expeditions to catch the receivers of stolen diamonds, especially when I got information that indicated my own mine as the loser. Sometimes the chase was quite exciting, with just an element of risk added. One night, when a terrific thunderstorm raged, Izdebski and I got drenched while watching, from a hole in the ground, the proceedings in one of these nefarious bargains. We rushed to the house and caught the buyer red-handed. Izdebski wished to make a search of the premises and was just about to leave the room we were in when he suddenly wheeled about and drew

his revolver. One of those violent claps of thunder, not uncommon in Kimberley when a flash of lightning was close, crashed, seemingly in the room, and he thought someone had fired ! The delinquent was duly secured, lodged in jail, and ultimately punished. He was a notorious character.

The illicit diamond buyers were usually well known ; there was a peculiarity about the buildings they occupied, which abounded in exits, and their Kaffir quarters were generally larger than the ordinary citizen provided. Moreover, the " boys " they employed were of the sophisticated, insolent type, not uncommonly possessing a smattering of education, gained at a mission station. The process of rescuing the barbarian from his primal savagery is always attended with danger. He may benefit, or he may sink deep in depravity.

The right to search for stolen diamonds was made a Government regulation, and searching-houses were installed at the mine exits. The white men deemed the system obnoxious and a strike ensued. That honest men should have objected seems extraordinary. Kimberley Mine was put in a state of defence, as the strike leaders made ominous threats. In fact, after a few days, it became clear that the men would have to acquiesce. This, of course, enraged the leaders, who incited their followers to break down the barricades. As usual in such cases, the dregs of the population, including of course the illicit fraternity and their intermediaries, joined the extremists among the men, and an attempt to rush the defences

ensued. The defenders fired, killing and wounding a number. The excitement was intense.

That night Spencer and I, who were troopers in the Diamond Fields Horse, were hailed by our troop leader with the news that Kimberley was being sacked, and the regiment was ordered out. We got into uniform and, joining our squadron, rode through Kimberley. All was quiet. A few groups of strikers, or their sympathisers, were about, but, beyond a little harmless hooting, did not challenge conclusions with us. Well mounted and equipped, we could have made short work of them. We were soon back at our cottage in Beaconsfield and in bed. Next day we were amused to hear that the wife of a much-esteemed prelate who lived just opposite to us complained of our having deserted her, as she might have been murdered in her bed ! Fantastic notion ! The strike fizzled out quickly and without any further untoward incident, in spite of terrible threats uttered by the strike leaders.

The trade in stolen diamonds was enormous, and very severe penal laws were framed to check it. Often I was called by the Crown in those cases as an expert witness. Each of the mines produced diamonds having distinctive characteristics. In the mass one could identify them assuredly as the produce of a given mine, but it is always possible to pick out of a parcel of stones from Dutoitspan, for instance, an individual specimen not unlike the run of diamonds from Bultfontein. Some witnesses used to swear definitely that a stone came from a given mine. I always refused to do that,

and limited myself to describing it as having the appearance of a diamond from this or that pipe. The crime was so serious that evidence of the most conclusive kind was, and rightly so, necessary to justify a conviction.

I now decided to take my deferred trip to England. At the railway station a number of friends assembled to wish me good luck, and among them Alfred Beit, with some other thriving investors. I had amassed *on paper* about £20,000, but I was quite ignorant of speculation and, though I knew that some of my possessions were of doubtful intrinsic merit, never gave a thought to panics or weird market vagaries of that kind. De Beers shares were then £43 each, and my friends said, "Buy yourself a couple of hundred De Beers. The profit on them will pay for your trip." I agreed. When I arrived home, a crash had intervened and they were £22. The loss to me was £4,200 ! I owed the purchase amount, and my other investments had, of course, collapsed too.

My projected holiday was spoiled. Moreover, my health was bad. After nine years of constant strain, heavy work, dreadful disregard of diet or of regular meal-times, I suffered much from indigestion. Dr. Quain, physician to Queen Victoria, a great authority, examined me and said there was nothing seriously the matter. He gave me a prescription. The medicine did me no good. I consulted another eminent doctor ; he advised starving. Yet another recommended feeding. Finally I found myself at the Smedley Hydro-pathic Establishment at Matlock Bath. There

I saw, on the evening of my arrival, a couple of hundred people drinking hot water with a spoon. That did not seem appetising, nor was the prospect of joining the throng enticing. I was rubbed, scrubbed, packed, and fed on boiled mutton and other fare that my deranged interior abhorred. I got thinner and thinner, weighing at last 98 lb. in the Turkish bath ! My emaciated legs could barely carry me. I thought I was dying, and, not being enraptured with my surroundings, determined to leave. I told the doctor important business demanded my attention abroad. He said it was a pity, as I was doing so well. I was convinced, on the other hand, that the doing would soon finish me. Perhaps he considered that one way of doing well ! I fled to Paris and threw all the nostrums to the winds. I ate and drank everything I fancied, contrary to all advice, and got quite respectably fat. No doubt I was really indebted to the treatment I had gone through, which had restored my system just to the right condition for rebuilding.

I went to London, where, of course, it was delightful to see my mother, relatives, and friends again, but I was not happy in England, where I felt a complete stranger. All my old playmates, so far from being as my imagination depicted, had changed during the lapse of nine years. What a stretch of time between twenty and thirty years of age ! None of the anticipated joys was realisable. I was impoverished ; my illness had absorbed a large part of the funds I had at my disposal, and I felt it essential to get back to work. Although I was, naturally, sore at losing my little

fortune, I was not really depressed on that account, as I had every confidence in my ability to repair the wreck. A self-reliant nature is a gift of inestimable worth. I went back to Kimberley, little dreaming of the time of tribulation and effort that awaited me.

On arrival I had about three pounds in my pocket. I borrowed a few pounds more and set out to seek a position as manager. I soon found my quest hopeless. In the eyes of the people I could read something I had never before seen there. The Griqualand West Company was in difficulties. Its shares were practically unsaleable. Its debt of £40,000 remained unliquidated, contrary to the advice I had given, and it was generally believed that the troubles were due to my extravagance ! I remember finally catechising myself and delivering to myself in the quietude of my room a little homily. It ran something like this, " You have been saddled with responsibilities that were not yours. You are discredited as a manager. Those who might, and should, have stood by you, knowing your work which they approved and applauded, have deserted you. You have been made a useful scapegoat. If you do not get to work somehow, you will join the small army of loafers round the Club who complain of luck never coming their way." I had no intention of becoming a loafer. I looked round the mines and eventually made an offer to the French & d'Esterre Company at Bultfontein to do by contract for one shilling work that was costing them one shilling and threepence per load. Naturally the offer was

accepted. My friend Francis Spencer joined me in this work, which consisted of breaking ground in the mine, hauling and delivering it on the surface. I became a contractor—rather a come-down from my previous managerial station. But I did not mind. Frank and I worked like slaves and made a good living.

About this time smallpox broke out among the mine natives. A great controversy arose among the doctors as to whether it was that disease or, as Jameson affirmed, a skin disease allied to pemphigus. Having boundless faith in Jameson's professional skill, I took his view and went fearlessly amongst my boys. Ultimately laboratory examination of the skin in England definitely diagnosed the malady as smallpox. The form in which it occurred was unquestionably mild, and, though it spread fairly generally among the natives, few deaths resulted and fewer white people were attacked.

Fumigating stations were erected round the mines, and one on the border in the Orange Free State got me into serious trouble. I was engaged to my wife at the time and managed to get a free afternoon to take her and her mother for a drive. We took the Free State road, and at the fumigating station (only a short distance away) I drove inside the gates to turn round—probably because the turn outside was bad or impracticable. The man at the gate saw that I had come from and was returning upon the road leading to the stricken city. He quickly shut the gate and insisted on fumigating all of us. I had an indignant altercation with him, but he was joined by a couple more

white men and some natives, so I had to submit. Perhaps because I had protested strongly, they gave us an extra dose of vile sulphurous fumes and nearly choked my mother-in-law elect ! I was furious, but could do no more than let them know my opinion of them.

Getting back to the mine, still boiling with rage, I reported the case to my friends. One of them said, "Let us go and wipe them out." Nothing suited my humour better. About ten of us got Cape carts and sallied out the next afternoon. We did exactly as I had done the previous afternoon. They did likewise. We argued in vain and then proceeded to defy them to fumigate us. They collected their three or four white men and about twenty natives. We produced pick handles and had a considerable scrimmage, out of which we emerged triumphant. On the road back we were pursued by two men on horseback, who commanded us to halt. We did so. They wanted us to go back. We refused. The one man was in command of the police, the other was unknown to us. Finding persuasion useless, the policeman said, "*Skiet die goed* [shoot the rubbish], *Commandant*." Suiting action to words, the Commandant leant over to draw his revolver from the holster. I jumped out of the cart on one side and one of my friends jumped on the other. We unhorsed the General and possessed ourselves of his holsters and contents. Unluckily, he was wearing a black alpaca coat, which tore in my hands from the collar to the waist. Commandant General Wolmarans, as he turned out to be, was incensed, of course, but could do

nothing, and Stevens, the policeman, was evidently unarmed. We were in Griqualand West, too, so they clearly had no right to arrest or to threaten us with firearms. We proceeded on our journey and deposited the holsters at the police station in Beaconsfield.

Nothing happened for some weeks, till one day Truter, the magistrate of Kimberley, sent for me and said an extradition warrant for riot had been applied for by the Free State Government. Fortunately, my fiancée's uncle held a very high position in the Free State, and I wrote to him explaining what had happened and the justification we had for putting an end to the needless, high-handed proceedings of the understrappers at the fumigation station. He took up the case and the charge was reduced to common assault, but we had to attend for trial at Bloemfontein. I was fined £10, and my friends lesser sums, all of which I naturally paid. That afternoon drive cost me over £60, but we had been scandalously used, and, anyhow, I thought the retribution we had exacted well worth the cost. We were all young and lively then and not in great awe of constituted authority.

Presently I took a contract to do the whole of the French & d'Esterre Company's work for 4s. per load, against their cost of 4s. 6d. All their officers had to do was to sort the washed deposit, recover the diamonds, and deal with them. I did well for some months and actually got married then. In view of the circumstances I am relating, I need hardly say that our honeymoon had to be

a short one, and we spent it at Riverton, on the Vaal River. I had not had a holiday for some time and, as I was studying general mathematics, I thought I would improve the shining hour by including in my baggage Norrie's *Navigation*. I might have known before taking the book that it would never be read—and so it turned out, for the looking-glass in our bedroom insisted on gazing at the floor and Norrie came in very opportunely for propping it up. There it remained until we started for home ! Happily the story which Archdeacon Gaul (now a Bishop) told my wife after the wedding had no application in our case, or Norrie might have been quite a relief, but, of course, I must tell the story to make the point. The reverend gentleman took my bride aside after the ceremony and addressed her as follows : “ A newly married couple were discovered on the tenth day of their honeymoon sitting back to back with a huge tree between them, and she was heard to say, ‘ How nice it would be if only a friend would come along ! ’ and he responded, ‘ Yes, or an enemy ! ’ ”

I had never worked as I worked at this period. At times, when the night shift in the mine was not producing a satisfactory output, I stayed on all night in addition to the day's work. Sometimes I took night shift regularly. In this way I pushed up the output—the only road to success for me. But my misfortunes were not to end. There was a drought. Transport became very scarce and dear. A famine in wood ensued, which was then used in all our boilers. The price went up from £10 or £12 to £35 per buck-wagon



*Photo by]*

*[Alice Hughes.*

MY WIFE IN 1890 (LONDON).



load. Most companies closed down. I had a contract and could not stop. I managed to complete it for the agreed price, which amounted to about £60,000 in all, but was again ruined. I explained matters fully to Alfred Beit, one of the directors. The Company invited me to become its general manager. My position and reputation were restored. I am proud of that time, and I tell the story for the benefit of young men who may meet with a similar knock-down blow. It was an invaluable lesson for me and taught me what work can be and can do.

The diamond mines as they became deeper presented a rather inspiring sight. The rugged sides, smouldering here and there from spontaneous combustion, due to the presence of sulphate of alumina in the shales, seemed associated with the subterranean forces expended ages before in the original upheaval. The aerial gears rapidly winding up the gem-yielding ground at all sorts of speeds and angles, and the noise of falling clods as the load reached the depositing box and was automatically tipped, added uproar to the picture. At night when work was in progress the lights below looked far distant in the depths and ranged themselves into shapes as though a decorative illumination were set out. Those accustomed to the giddy heights used to sit upon the chains connecting the bucket with the hauling wire as the safest position. My life was saved once by riding in this fashion when a standing wire broke. The steel bucket and its heavy frame fell one way and I the other. Had I been standing in the bucket

I should have accompanied it and probably been killed. I fell about thirty feet on to loose reef and then rolled down and bumped from ledge to ledge to the bottom, an unpleasant and rapid journey which seemed an eternity as I clutched at the loose lumps and tried in vain to stop. I must have rolled and bumped over the steep sides a distance of three hundred feet, and Dr. Otto, who saw the occurrence from the other side, rode round post-haste, and when I was brought up, with torn nails, scratched, bruised, and shaken, but otherwise unhurt and fully conscious, said, "Little P., I thought you would be sent up in a sack!" Accidents of this kind were not common, but my experience was by no means unique. When the gold mines come under review I shall describe an accident to my friend Frank Spencer of a blood-curdling description, from which he emerged unscathed. His escape borders on the miraculous.

Going down at night was a weird sensation, especially as the bucket swept through the quadrant that directed it over the edge of the crater to the steeper gradient beyond. Sometimes, if the angle of the wires was rather flat on the surface between the quadrant and the depositing box, the hauling wire, being fairly heavy, would sag. As the bucket went over the quadrant the slack would be suddenly taken up and the person on the chains had to hold fast to prevent his being jerked off. Sometimes strangers desired to go down the mine, and if they did not relish the steep walk on foot (especially if heights troubled their equilibrium), we made them stand in the bucket, as they could not fall

out from giddiness and the risk of the accident described was, of course, infinitesimal.

In 1886 Beit got leave from the mine for me to visit Barberton and report upon that district for him. The journey to Pretoria was done by coach. When I recall long journeys by those vehicles, run by Cobb & Company, by Zederburg, Heys, and other proprietors, I wonder how the passengers survived them. The coaches were always full and held nine or twelve passengers inside and, besides the driver and leader, six or seven outside, with a boot carrying say a ton of packages, of mails and luggage. Ten or twelve horses or mules did stages of from twelve to fifteen miles continuously by day and night. The passengers were packed like sardines in a tin, knees touching or linked. At the start one felt too short of room to breathe. Gradually shaking down, there seemed enough room (though very bulky persons were always oppressive), and the coach appeared to grow in width or the bodies to become thinner. We slept sitting bolt upright and dozed familiarly on each other's shoulders, with an extra jerk occasionally to restore consciousness and relieve our neighbour. I learnt one invaluable practice from an old traveller, namely, always to carry a spare pair of socks handy. Even sitting in a coach one's feet became slightly damp during the day and one suffered agonies from cold feet unless one could put on dry footgear.

After passing Potchefstroom, we crossed the famous Witwatersrand, then unknown as a gold-field. A few little propositions were being worked in the neighbourhood, notably one by Struben at

Kromdraai, but this was an isolated deposit not far from, but not upon, the famous sedimentary "banket" deposits. The Rand was then a very desolate region. One might travel a hundred miles without seeing a tree, and fifteen or twenty miles between wretched hovels in which the *tak-haar* (literally, tousle-haired) Boers lived, or rather eked out a wretched existence, with a few sheep and goats that had to be moved to the low country in winter to escape the inclemency and withered grass of that high plateau. One could at that time have bought large farms of 10,000 acres and more for £200 apiece. And through those inhospitable areas ran the greatest beds of gold-bearing conglomerates in the world !

Our party comprised six men. From Pretoria we journeyed in our own mule-wagon. At that date herds of koodoo and sable antelope disported themselves on the almost uninhabited veld. They were, alas ! in a few years ruthlessly exterminated for their skins and to make "biltong" (dried meat). We travelled many days without incident, occasionally falling in with a prospector, of whom there were many abroad, who usually told us tales of rich finds in this or that direction. Thaine Allen, who was with me, always urged me to go straight to our destination and not allow myself to be tempted into inspections elsewhere. He said, "These prospectors will lure you up to the Zambesi if you will let them."

So on we went through Middelburg, until we reached the Elands Berg, overlooking the Queen's Valley, with the Barberton Mountains as a back-

ground. At this point a halt had to be called. There was only a track down the mountain so steep that one had to look over the edge to see it. I have travelled far and wide in South Africa and have never since seen such a road. A well-constructed zigzag was subsequently made by the Government. What I am about to relate is the simple, unvarnished truth. Our mules had to be dispensed with and oxen substituted, as being slower and steadier. Three out of the four wheels were tied fast, only one being left to revolve. The oxen would pull and the wagon skid down a few yards. It would fetch up against one of the big boulders which abounded in the track and were really the only obstacles that prevented the wagon from falling down the hill. Six *reims* (soft-hide ropes) were fastened to the rails, three on either side with a man at each. When the oxen gave another pull, the wheels on that side would mount the obstruction and the wagon would frequently have turned over on the opposite side but for the steadyng of the three stalwarts doing tug-of-war with the reims! I remember the whole scene so well because it was my province to drive the mules down the mountain. I was mounted on a sturdy pony, and when half-way down met "Mad Owen" coming up. We could not well stop and so exchanged the time of day as we passed. I turned in my saddle to shout out something to him, and my pony went familiarly close to one of the mules, which kicked me on the shin. The pain of that pleasantry still dwells in my memory. We got down the hill at last and reached the roaring camp.

The scenery round Barberton and Moodies is fine. The Queen's River in the valley causes a semi-tropical humidity which is not healthy. Most of the reefs were at a considerable elevation in the hills. I will not dally over my inspections in that area or later at Lydenburg and Pilgrim's Rest, all in fine bold country. I had to take great care not to be hoodwinked. I will give one instance. A property called the Oct . . . r Reef was offered. I took samples in the presence of the owners with one of my assistants. It was rich. I had a strange intuition, an uneasy foreboding that something was wrong. That night I went down with one of my party to the place we had sampled and with sharp picks cut away a good bit of the reef, and then took fresh samples. They contained no gold ! I left the tempting proposition alone and discovered later on that the proprietors used to go into the drive with shotguns and fire into the face. In the cartridges gold dust, which penetrated into the cracks and crevices of the surface, was used in place of shot ! One has to approach gold properties with a suspicious eye, and sit on the sample bags or gold dust can be blown in. Where panning is being done, beware of cigarette smoking ; the ashes dropping into the pan may contain gold dust. There are tricks innumerable that may make a fool of one. I shall not touch the business aspect of my visit. I saw the great Sheba Mine and other valuable chutes and chimneys, but was not greatly enamoured of the mineral outlook for big-scale work, and reported accordingly.

My journey back to Kimberley was eventful. I

was anxious to get home, as I had been married nearly a year and my wife was in a delicate condition. I decided to travel to Durban, thence by sea to Cape Town and up to Kimberley by railway, being told that route was as quick as the other. We left by postcart and reached Lake Chrissie, where, to my dismay, I found the vehicle remained, on religious grounds, from Saturday afternoon to Monday morning, reaching Durban twelve hours after the mail steamer sailed. I was furious, and induced two men I knew from Natal, Brunskill and Leonard Acutt by name, to join me in the adventurous project of beating the postcart. I was able to hire a Cape cart and four good horses from the Robertsons at Rolfontein to take us on about thirty miles. Then our troubles began. Sometimes the three of us and the driver were perched on a sort of gin-case on wheels, meant to hold two. Sometimes we got a decent team. Once we had a driver who professed to know the road but, crossing a river in the dark, upset us in the middle because he did not know the drift, which, instead of crossing the river at right angles, traversed it diagonally.

On one occasion we could raise only one steady horse and a half-trained animal of which the owner gave a bad character. We decided to take our chance and started off gaily and quietly enough. Something upset our ill-reputed equine. He kicked up, frightened his companion, and off they galloped into the veld. I was driving, but had no more control over them than an infant. Acutt caught hold of one rein to try to help. Brunskill jumped

or fell out. We bumped on until the machine struck an ant-heap and turned over. We were unhurt. We disentangled our horses and picked up our missing companion, who was uninjured but pitifully aggrieved at his treatment, and no doubt sore in body too. He grumbled much, and was not really constituted to bear rough usage. Acutt was a fine chap and did not utter a word of complaint at anything. We were not sorry to be quit of that turnout, which, according to agreement, we left at the next farm to be sent for.

We had a very fatiguing stage over the Biggarsberg, and about the summit of the pass reached a mission station at about 2 a.m. Everyone in the place seemed dead, for, in spite of the din we made ringing bells, beating on doors, and ravaging the silence of the night by shouting, an age elapsed, as it seemed, before we got any response. Then a sleepy lay brother appeared and, after we had explained our plight and needs, he regaled our starving appetites upon sweet cake and German beer. We could not get beds, but were so tired that we slept at the table. We resumed our journey and finally reached Estcourt, then the recently completed terminus of the Natal line. A train was leaving for Durban in a few hours. Having pledged the hotel-keeper to wake us, we went to bed. He failed us and the train left without us. We hastened to the station and got permission to go down by an empty construction train, which got us to port in time to catch the ship.

I look back with delight upon that journey, for

our enterprise was rewarded and the sweet sense of triumphant accomplishment lingers in my memory. I arrived home, however, four days too late to greet my first-born son, but was of course proud to make his acquaintance.

I retained my position as manager until the four principal mines of Griqualand West passed under the control of the De Beers Consolidated Mines in 1888. The amalgamation of the Kimberley and De Beers Mines and the acquisition by lease of other areas of production resulted in the control of output. That was a vital matter for the mines and the diamond trade. Excessive supply not only lowered the value of diamonds, but frightened buyers so effectively that at times they became practically unsaleable. From the days when Mr. Merriman put forward premature proposals for unification, already mentioned, to the ultimate consummation of the scheme for which Rhodes and Beit had consistently worked, I was one of its advocates and supporters.

In looking through some papers lately I lighted upon two formal letters from the De Beers Consolidated Mines which bear on the subject. The first, dated May 18th, 1889, requested me to make a written report upon "the amount to be paid for leasing the properties of the Compagnie Générale, the Franco-Africaine, and the Bultfontein Companies," for submission, as evidence, at the agreed arbitration to assess the rental. The second, dated November 16th of that year, thanked me for services rendered in the acquisition of other properties. A matter of greater consequence to me,

in those days, was the Board's vote of a substantial honorarium. W. H. Craven, at that time Secretary of the Company, was held in high esteem. He was one of the early arrivals and founded the first Club at Kimberley, which bore his name. After the amalgamation the huge undertaking required as General Manager a man of higher technical qualifications and wider mining experience than I possessed, and Mr. Gardner F. Williams, an American engineer of high repute, was appointed.

I then decided to bid good-bye to the diamond mines, where I had spent thirteen years. While I had passed many happy days in that fine but exacting climate, my wife and I were both tired of the incessant glare of the sun and the parched atmosphere. Moreover, the prospects there were not attractive to me. I could doubtless have had a good position, equal, or even superior from a monetary standpoint, to that I was relinquishing, but I had higher ambitions and determined to strike out for myself in a new sphere.

I was only about thirty-three years of age, had had considerable experience in handling men, had gained in knowledge, in strength of body and of purpose in the robust school of the diamond mines. A self-reliant nature is doubtless to some extent born in one, but, just as physical culture improves our muscles, so our resourceful capacity is trained by having to face and surmount difficulties. Situations arose sometimes on the diamond mines that demanded immediate action, which taxed one's powers of invention and stimulated one's force of character.

## CHAPTER III

### WARS AND REBELLIONS

**I**N this world of ours, so minute in the vast firmament, events bear upon each other in a remarkable degree. In our own lives an error of commission or omission usually finds us out, and we can perceive the consequences, though they should alone be known to ourselves. In public affairs the effects are disclosed in time and become historical. Whether we merely pursue a preordained destiny or are shuttlecocks hurled about by the bat of accident is not determinable.

In the few years I spent on the diamond fields many conflicts raged in South Africa, much blood was spilt, and significant results followed to that country and to the British Empire. I shall only glide over them swiftly, as they are fully recorded; but to understand future occurrences it is necessary to be reminded of the past.

The Boers of the Northern Transvaal were men who, owing to circumstances, were schooled in the laws of the veld and the rifle to the neglect of the arts of peace or the classroom. They had invaded the country and ousted the natives, who themselves, be it remembered, had ousted other natives and were not good settlers. If the white men had fought for and conquered specific areas, and had

held and remained in them, the natives might have settled down contentedly. This was not the case. Forays were the order of the day, and thus disputes and fights became endemic. The natives of that region were then savages and human life was held by them of small account. The Boers were certainly not either enlightened or endowed with drawing-room manners. But they came of good solid stock, and of course, under civilised conditions, would have justified their ancestry. Excessive military service, however, had blunted their racial refinement, had caused them to neglect their pastoral duties, and had utterly impoverished them. They were the sons of the old *voortrekkers*, inured to hardships. No doubt many of them were coarse and cruel. Any Europeans under like conditions would have deteriorated similarly. The Boers of the Cape Colony, Natal, and the Orange Free State, living under more cultivated and easier conditions, looked down on them as beyond the pale.

In the untamed regions of Zoutpansberg these men tried conclusions with Sekukun, a considerable chieftain whose stronghold was well placed upon a rugged mountain. Ketchwayo was believed to stand behind this chief, though he does not seem to have given him military assistance. The undertaking, in their ill-prepared state, was formidable and indeed, as the sequel showed, they lacked the heart for it. As a matter of fact, brave as the Boers are, their particular prowess shines rather in defence than attack. Anyhow, these men had apparently lost some of the dash and vigour of their forefathers, and when, on August 2nd, 1876, two

columns were ordered to storm Sekukun's kraals, they refused to obey, and dispersed. Some Englishmen with a few Germans and native contingents made an attack which failed utterly. President Burgers, who behaved well, urged the Boers rather to shoot than desert him. They seem to have had no more desire for the blood of their brave President than for the assault upon the mountain fastness. The defection of the Boers and the failure of the others forced Burgers to retire with a few men to Steelpoort, where he built a fort prior to returning to Pretoria. After this set-back Captain von Schlickmann, a German, was permitted to raise an irregular force. Loot was offered as a bait to recruits. The gallant Captain (who was subsequently killed), a brave but brutal man, was joined in the enterprise by a man named Erasmus, and between them a series of fiendish atrocities was committed. All authorities, including Theal, never unfriendly to the Boers, agree as to that.

The natives were in a parlous state, but they were not defeated, and it was only on November 28th, 1879, after the Zulu War, that Colonel Russell Baker with British troops stormed and reduced the stronghold of Sekukun. The grit of the famous pioneers of the Great Trek had for the time being deserted the Boers, for reasons not difficult to understand—overwrought systems lowered in vitality by insufficient food. The change that was to come over them in a few years we shall presently see.

While the events above described were proceeding in the Transvaal, unrest appeared in the Cape

Colony, and in August 1877 the Gaikas, under Sandilli, followed shortly by Galekas, under Kreli, rebelled. The usual accompaniments of savage warfare ensued, and though the fighting did not assume great proportions, the outbreak was not quelled until May 1878. There is no doubt at that period the native tribes throughout South Africa were in a disturbed state, and the Zulu War was looming in the distance. Thanks to the brave determination of Sir Bartle Frere, the campaign was circumscribed. Disregarding personal risk, he went himself to the disaffected areas, and through his energetic action minimised the suffering and the losses. The population of that part of the Cape Colony had over and over again sustained dangers and hardships in previous Kaffir wars, and in some instances of a far more serious character.

In the Transvaal, apart from the struggle with Sekukun, other dramatic events were proceeding and in process of incubation. The Boer Government was tottering—its Treasury empty, its debts unpaid, and its subjects thoroughly disobedient. They were in no situation to meet and defeat the impending Zulu invasion. Burgers himself, who had made every effort to govern the country honestly, and had sacrificed his own private fortune in the attempt, gave it up in despair. I cannot do better than quote the first few phrases of a long speech which he delivered from manuscript in the Raad (the whole speech is reproduced on p. 144 of Iwan Muller's *Lord Milner and South Africa*) :

“ I would rather be a policeman under a strong Government than a President of such a State. It is you—you members of the Raad and the Boers—who have lost the country, who have sold your independence for a *soupie* [a drink]. You have ill-treated the natives, you have shot them down, you have sold them into slavery, and now you have to pay the penalty.”

President Burgers on his deathbed, in 1881, stated that Kruger, notwithstanding his promise of the support of himself and his party, had in reality allied himself with the English faction on behalf of annexation, thus intriguing against the Government, thwarting all efforts to bring about reform, and encouraging the refusal to pay taxes. Burgers further accused Kruger of taking this course to oust him from the presidency and secure it for himself. Whether this be the true explanation or not, Kruger did actually succeed to the position.

I had not been to the Transvaal in person at that date, but my recollection of the time is vivid and I can conscientiously affirm that, according to report, organised administration was in abeyance. There was no hope of its restoration. Excessive military service and the grinding poverty of the people, as well as the utter contempt in which the Republican Government was held, augured badly for the future, with hosts of native enemies watching for a favourable opportunity to descend upon them. Indirectly this was a situation of supreme concern to the whole sub-continent, for the subjugation by natives of any section of the meagre white inhabi-

tants might, and probably would, have been followed by a widespread rising of all the natives. The annexation of the Transvaal by the British Government, through Shepstone, on April 12th, 1877, was the only rational solution. The blunder made was in allowing Burgers to lodge a protest, even "as a matter of form," or *oogen verblinding*—literally "eye-blinding." So acute was the danger of a Zulu invasion, and so pregnant with grave consequences to the white race in the absence of preparedness to meet it, that Shepstone was justified in his action upon that if not upon other grounds. This happened before Sir Bartle Frere had assumed the reins of office. Shepstone's message to Ketchwayo upon annexation seems to have quieted that warrior for a time, though, as we shall see, his blood-lust was only lulled for the moment.

Poor Sir Bartle Frere, he had put his head into a political hornet's nest in accepting the post of High Commissioner. His experience as a statesman warned him to expect agitation as the outcome of Burgers's protest, if only to give some force and the semblance of sincerity to it, for the Boers were then in no position to challenge the British Crown. Such dissatisfaction as a few of the burghers expressed was less loud, prolonged, or influential than might have been anticipated. Sir Bartle Frere was really sent to South Africa to secure the acquiescence of the local legislatures to the Act of Confederation, passed through the Imperial Parliament at the instance of Lord Carnarvon, then Secretary of State for the Colonies. The mere form of procedure doomed the proposal, for if there is one thing colonists have always cordially

disliked, it is action by Downing Street in advance of their consent. But, anyhow, the times were far too unsettled to think of federation.

Within a month of the annexation Paul Kruger and Dr. Jorissen left as a Commission to protest against it in Europe. No useful purpose would be served by an examination of the intrigues entered upon, or the misuse of a petition signed against confederation and represented as having reference to the annexation. There was a good deal of artificiality, to use a mild term, about the alleged wholesale objection to annexation. The agitation was more lavishly supported by the Dutch of the Free State and Cape Colony than by those of the Transvaal itself, where the desperate condition of the Republic was appreciated. Lord Carnarvon, however, received the Commission with friendly consideration and gave generous promises regarding the use of the Dutch language and educational advantages, for which little practical provision had been made by the Republic, whatever private solicitude on that head may have been felt. Kruger and Jorrisen both held office under the British Government during the occupation.

But I must turn away from the political issues, which were academic rather than practical at that time, to mention graver matters. Official evidence of the Zulu menace showed it to be very real and its realisation imminent. Ketchwayo had massed his forces to overrun the Transvaal and sweep the Boers over the Vaal River. That the Transvaalcrs would have received active sup-

port from the Free State and Cape Colony if the invasion had materialised is unquestionable, and in the end, even perhaps without the aid of British troops, the Zulus might have been subdued, but the carnage in the first onslaught, which the Transvaal alone would have had to meet and which it could not have resisted, would have been appalling, and, in view of the great distances and absence of means of communication, it is more than probable that nearly every white man, woman, and child in that country would have been killed before effective aid could have reached them. Ketchwayo, in replying to Shepstone's notification of the annexation by the Great White Queen, said :

“I am glad my father Somtseu [Shepstone] has sent a message, because the Dutch have tired me out, and I intended to fight them once, only once, and to drive them over the Vaal. Kabana [one of his *indunas*], you see my *impis* [regiments] are gathered. It is to fight the Dutch I called them together. Now I will send them back to their homes.”

But the respite was short. By the end of the year (December 1877) Sir Henry Bulwer, Governor of Natal, reported to Frere that the Zulus were bitterly hostile to the new Transvaal Government, and suggested the appointment of an arbitrator between the Government and Ketchwayo. Gallant Frere decided to undertake the mission himself, and went to Natal in September 1878. After examining the evidence of the frontier commission, he gave his award in favour of the Zulu claim,

but accompanied it, in the interest of peace in South Africa, by a demand that Ketchwayo should disband his army and accept a British Resident at his capital, Ulundi. The boundary award, of course, annoyed the Dutch, and the ultimatum, for that is what it amounted to, enraged the Zulu king. The justice of the finding was probably unimpeachable, but the tactical wisdom is, at first sight, open to doubt. Anyone with an elementary knowledge of the Kaffir mind would know that, in those days anyhow, the word gratitude was unknown in their language and that force alone appealed to them. Frere suspected, no doubt, that Ketchwayo was bent on a trial of conclusions with the white man and hoped, as the result of a first successful rush, to incite a general rising of all the Bantu tribes. The High Commissioner, knowing the sparsity of organised forces, played a strong card to delay the outburst if possible. It failed lamentably. Ketchwayo replied :

“ Did I ever tell Shepstone ? Did he tell the white people I made such an arrangement ? Because if he did he has deceived them. I do kill, but do not consider yet I have done anything in the way of killing. Why do the white people start at nothing ? I have not yet begun. I have yet to kill ; it is the custom of our nation, and I shall not depart from it. Why does the Governor of Natal speak to me about my laws ? Do I go to Natal and dictate to him about his laws ? I shall not agree to any laws or rules from Natal, and by so doing throw the great Kraal which I govern into the water. My people will not listen unless they are killed ; and, while wishing to be friends

with the English, I do not agree to give over my people to laws sent by them. Have I not asked the English Government to allow me to wash my spears since the death of my father Umpandi, and they have kept playing with me all this time and treating me like a child? Go back and tell the English that I shall act on my own account, and if they wish me to agree to their laws I shall leave and become a wanderer; but before I go it will be seen that I shall not go without having acted. Go back and tell the white man this, and let him hear it well. The Governor of Natal and I are equal. He is Governor of Natal and I am Governor here."

Lord Chelmsford was sent to enforce the High Commissioner's instructions and crossed the Lower Tugela early in January 1879. I need not recount the humiliating story. Miserable carelessness cost the lives of nearly seven hundred British and Colonial and six hundred native troops in camp at Insandjluan, upon whom 15,000 Zulus suddenly descended in crescent formation. Only forty whites escaped before the horns of the *impi* united. The rest fought on until their ammunition gave out and all were slaughtered. A thrill of horror shook South Africa as the news filtered through. The natives at Kimberley had received the information before it was known to us and it was perceptible in their demeanour. Their power of rapidly transmitting news by calling from hill to hill is amazing. Chelmsford, who had advanced from his camp before the disaster, fell back on his base in Natal to await reinforcements. Ultimately he again entered Zululand with 4,000 white and 1,000

native troops, and on July 4th, 1879, he fought the battle of Ulundi and decisively defeated the Zulus, whose numbers were estimated at 20,000. Immediately after that successful battle, Lord Chelmsford was superseded by Sir Garnet (afterwards Lord) Wolseley, who, on August 27th, reported to the Secretary of State that the Zulu power had been crushed. This campaign, coupled with the subsequent subjection of Sekukun by Great Britain, definitely marked the paramountcy of the white race in South Africa.

Meanwhile Sir Bartle Frere came into conflict with the Molteno Government at the Cape. I will not revive that old controversy, but Mr. Iwan Muller, on p. 172 of his *Lord Milner and South Africa*, says: "Among the many services Sir Bartle did his country, not the least was the stand he made in the interest of the Imperial Government for the retention of prerogatives, without which the British claim of supremacy in South Africa would have been a common mockery." It ended in the dismissal of Mr. Molteno and the formation of a Government under Sir Gordon Sprigg. He was an obstinate, consequential little man of no particularly striking mental gifts, but he was staunchly loyal.

At this time an event occurred that ended in Sir Bartle Frere's betrayal. He had accepted office mainly out of affection for Lord Carnarvon and a laudable desire to further the policy of confederation. Sir Michael Hicks Beach succeeded Carnarvon and was not in sympathy with Frere. He was irked, indeed, to find that the Colonial

Secretaryship, so far from being a sinecure, demanded a great deal of his time, which he desired to bestow upon party politics. Gladstone was thundering in his Midlothian speeches and the whole Radical pack was in full cry over the annexation of the Transvaal and the disaster at Insandjluan. Frere was censured—almost a compliment, for the great men of England have been repeatedly treated thus by politicians whose sense of propriety rests upon political expediency. I had the honour of knowing Sir Bartle Frere in person and I have studied his Life by Martineau. Let those who question his nobility of character, his great gifts, and his dastardly recompense, read that illuminating book.

So far from returning loyal obedience to Great Britain for having broken their native enemies and opened the door for peaceful resumption of civil life, Kruger and his friends redoubled their efforts to regain their independence. The English Government was spending large sums in the country, and the Boers, freed from the perpetual anxiety of native retaliation, were able to attend to their normal, if not commonly too exacting, activities. But political meetings and agitation have always appealed to them and have tended to hamper material progress. The methods adopted to distort the grounds upon which they had been annexed were morally none too nice. Real grievances, however, soon provided a more substantial basis of discontent. Sir Owen Lanyon, an Irish military officer, had been selected as Administrator. He was totally unfitted for the post. He had, more-

over, served long in the West Indies and his complexion was suspiciously dark. Whether or not there was a taint of coloured blood in his veins I cannot say, but swarthy skins are ill-favoured among white people in South Africa. Neither he nor the officials under him paid any heed to the desires or susceptibilities of the Boers. They took no pains to study or conciliate them and pursued an arbitrary policy, standing aloof from the governed. This attitude, coupled with the incessant incitement of the agitators, gradually produced a state of acrimony that ended in revolt.

The sequel is too fresh to need recapitulation here. The country had become relatively prosperous and the revolution found the Boers once again well armed and prepared for the fray. This conflict is known as the War of Independence, 1880-1. Several histories contain full details of the campaign—a real disgrace to British arms. Nothing but reverses attended the conflict, and when Sir Evelyn Wood had secured adequate reinforcements and deemed his power sufficient to suppress the revolt, he cabled to the Prime Minister for instructions instead of establishing the Queen's authority first. Mr. Gladstone insisted upon negotiations being opened which resulted in the conclusion of peace. The assumption that his vaunted magnanimity would be appreciated was entirely erroneous and was very naturally misunderstood by the Boers, who thought they had vanquished the English nation. The British flag was solemnly buried in Pretoria by the British residents, whose plight was deplorable. Being English and friends, they were,

as usual, disregarded and abandoned, no doubt under the perverted notion of placating foes. Many, indeed most of the English in the Transvaal, were ruined and, cursing the British Government, left the country. Quite a change came over South Africa. The British were humiliated and despised—even in distant Kimberley men went about with heads bowed in shame—and the triumphant Dutch throughout the country took up the cry of Africa for the Afrikanders. The Transvaal Boers, held of small account a couple of years back, became heroes.

The surrender of that time sowed the seeds of all that followed. It gave birth to the ambitious aims that ended in the murder of Bethell and the land-grabbing violation of British territory, privately encouraged by the Transvaal Government and only arrested by the bloodless Warren Expedition of 1885 against the notorious filibusters of Stellaland and Goschen. The Transvaal Government did not wish to cross swords with the British again at that stage. They had by then other ideas, and, with their diplomatic staff of Hollanders, had grandiose dreams of a united South Africa under the republican flag. Foreign powers were approached, and it is quite possible, but for the opposition, the talent, and the untiring zeal of that great imperialist Cecil John Rhodes, they might have succeeded. The desire to rid themselves of the suzerainty became an obsession. In 1884, by securing a modification of the Convention of 1881, they came near to achieving it, but, although concessions were made, the right to make treaties

with foreign Powers or natives out of their territory was withheld.

The revenues of the Republic were improving slightly, owing to gold discoveries in the Lydenburg District, mostly alluvial deposits, which attracted a certain number of *uitlanders*, who, however, were not met with open arms. Thus things dragged along until Barberton and the Witwatersrand drew a European population in large numbers. Small wonder the little nation of extremely backward Dutch farmers disliked and feared the intrusion of the *uitlanders* with their feverish activity and their foreign manners and customs. As my narrative proceeds we shall see what use was made of the restored independence. But I must not anticipate, even if chronological order be not too strictly followed.

I will close this brief résumé by repeating a stern truth referred to on the first page, namely, the greatness of a nation, however powerful, must inevitably suffer, if it does not perish, by accepting defeat from the weak, once force is resorted to. The decline and fall of great Empires has almost invariably been heralded by a condition of moral cowardice and apathy in their peoples. Weakness in the moral fibre of a nation has a debilitating influence and spreads to the ruling classes. It manifests itself in feeble counsels and irresolute action. Is it not apparent in events that have transpired in England since the Great War? It would seem that periods of great stress, where manhood is strained to its limits, are followed by periods of timid lassitude. And it is not war alone

that produces this phenomenon, but also surrender to ill-judged popular clamour, raised under the cloak of benign concern for the less well-to-do, which is ruinous in its effects upon the fortunes of the whole nation. But that is another story.

## CHAPTER IV

### A THRILLING TRIP

**I**MUST now pick up the thread of my own experiences.

The French & d'Esterre Company treated me handsomely and during my last year of service with them granted me leave to visit the North-Eastern Transvaal. Stories of wonderful gold discoveries were in circulation. In such study as I have been able to give to the subject I have learned to be wary of phenomenal riches. I remember someone submitting some enormously rich specimens to an experienced French engineer. He examined them critically but unmoved, and, handing them back to the owner, said, "*C'est contre la nature.*" Of course, unusually productive areas do occur, but they are rare, and the higher their yield, the smaller generally their extent. In Barberton a "chimney" a few feet wide gave £50,000 of gold to Thomas and his brother. Many isolated instances could be quoted. The rumour of fabulous wealth is always exciting, and I therefore went to the Low Country on the tiptoe of expectation.

I travelled by coach from Kimberley to Pretoria, then by another coach to Pietersburg, and by still another via Smitsdorp (a tin town that has since disappeared) to Haenertsburg. In the

neighbourhood of the places mentioned much prospecting was in progress and some mineral deposits were being opened up, none of them ultimately proving highly payable or consistent. Haenertsburg was regarded as the outpost of the white man's penetration in that part of South Africa. No road existed beyond that *dorp*, which comprised half a dozen houses. It has grown somewhat since, but is still a small village. Two friends who were touring in the Northern Transvaal (Jules Porges and J. B. Taylor) accompanied me to Haenertsburg. There we parted company, and they said good-bye in rather lugubrious tones. Few white men had then visited the semi-tropical, low-lying, and reputedly fever-stricken region which I was about to traverse.

The hamlet of Haenertsburg is situated in fine bold country upon the southern end of the Wood-bush Mountain. The rainfall is heavy, but I had timed my visit towards the end of the wet season. I left with a young white man, who had been down before, and a few natives to carry necessaries. After walking a mile or two we reached the upper edge of the mountain, whence it falls rapidly to the Low Country. The prospect there is magnificent. At one's feet, 2,000 feet below, lie the undulating foothills, a vast panorama of forest-clad mountain-sides fringed on the south-east by the mighty range of the Drakensburg, the rugged backbone of Eastern South Africa. Looking down from the eminence 5,000 or 6,000 feet above the sea, the glory of the scene cannot be easily described.

We toiled down the single track walking in Indian

file, as natives always do to preserve the path and limit the risk from snakes. Those pests generally flee from man if possible, though there are ferocious varieties that will make an unprovoked attack. Still, none of the species cares to be trodden on ! The path was distinguishable only by following a disturbed and discoloured line in the grass. The tramped soil beneath was rarely visible. Hence one has to proceed with caution, for occasional furrows, caused by the rains, give one a nasty jar if dropped into unawares, and there are loose stones, here and there, ready to sprain one's ankle—a horrible contingency for pedestrians in such a locality. Occasionally, too, other disturbed lines in the herbage, similar in appearance, leave the main track, and lead to Kaffir kraals perhaps far distant. A guide is therefore essential, though, of course, it is possible to steer by a compass. Gradually, as one descends, the temperature rises and the air becomes laden with the delicious aromatic odours of unfamiliar vegetation.

The impression gained at the summit of the mountain of the country below is changed upon reaching its base. In place of mere rolling plains, as we were led to expect by the prospect, formidable hills confronted us, and in spots we had to force our way through old mealie gardens where rank weeds, higher than our heads, flourished, and in which the atmosphere was heavy, humid, and highly scented—ravishing, in one sense, especially in comparison with the chilly wind blowing without as I write here in London, but enervating and insidiously suggestive of reptiles, wild beasts, fever, and other unattractive perils.

In the dry winter weather grass fires may be a real danger. On the high veld, where the herbage is neither very thick nor high, they are not alarming and can usually be stamped out with little difficulty, though they stunt the small trees and bushes met with intermittently. At lower altitudes, and particularly in the thick vegetation of the Low Country, they are formidable. A horse can be ridden through a grass fire in the first region by a determined rider. Not so through the fierce heat and roar of a conflagration in the second locality. On it sweeps before the wind at a galloping pace, and neither man nor beast can face it. Before its advance one can see wild game, vermin, and reptiles flying for dear life. Should one detect a fire in the distance coming in one's direction, two courses are open—to burn a patch round oneself or to fly. The burning of a haven of safety is indeed a precarious job, unless three or four men are available to beat out and control the spreading flames. If one has a horse he will certainly be "salted," i.e. an animal that has contracted and survived horse-sickness, and will inevitably have lost his spirit and pace, but he may be urged into a slow gallop and carry one to a rocky eminence or the shelter of some native timber, which is generally protected by green vegetation of an aromatic variety that will not burn. In the early months of winter the air is usually still, but in July and August, when the gales arise that precede the rainy season and the country is at its driest, a veld fire in those regions is a fearsome occurrence.

At night on our first day's march we reached

Mashuta's Kraal. We bought a skinny fowl and some milk, but refused the hospitality of a hut, most likely too lively for our fancy, and spread our rugs instead beneath a tree, where we slept. Mashuta ruled over a small tribe and, like his neighbour Mamatola, owed allegiance to Madjajee, the paramount chief. The two petty chiefs were at war—were, indeed, in a state of perpetual war. On our way to Mamatola's we came upon a wire fence. The path passed between two poles, on the top of each of which a skull reposed. In a short while we traversed a similar fence, similarly decorated. This narrow strip was neutral ground. A native from either tribe caught within (by the enemy) was ruthlessly despatched. No actual fighting was in progress as we traversed the territory of the "monarchs." We crossed several rivers—the Letaba, Letsitele, and others—before we reached the Selati and arrived at what we called our camp. There we made a reed shelter and laid out our belongings, mostly tools and prospecting outfit.

I should delight in refreshing my memory over the entrancing experiences I had during the six weeks I spent in that splendid land, the agricultural possibilities of which are now being recognised and explored. But I fear my pen might rather flatter my own recollections than interest my reader. Descriptions of Nature in her grandiose moods do her scant justice. They are never sufficiently graphic to present a worthy picture to eyes unfamiliar with the scenes. But some nights linger in my sight so vividly that I will try to give an idea of them here.

Imagine a long tramp—twenty or thirty miles—over rough country. The evening meal consumed and no sound other than that made by a few Kaffirs jabbering round the fire. Darkness by eight o'clock, leading one to "turn in," with limbs tired but brain little taxed. A delicious sense of contentment, with nerves relaxed to welcome sleep, such sleep as the dwellers in towns know not. By about three o'clock in the morning one was fully awake, with the senses keenly alert. The body revelling in the soft bed of carefully laid grass—quite an art to prepare. The illuminated heavens above, with twinkling stars overhead, hanging like grapes from a pergola, seemingly inviting one to pick them. A stillness profound. A hundred memories, reflections, and projects surging through the mind as in a dream—the pettiness of mundane things, the conceit of man in allotting to himself and this speck of sand in space a privileged position in the cosmos. It is easy enough to understand the origin of such a hope, but less easy to justify it. All things are possible, but this pretension seems vain-glorious. "*Vanitas vanitatum, omnia vanitas.*" And then the gradual awakening of life around. The stealthy tread of a four-footed wanderer, the flutter of a bird, the swift capture of something—a momentary expression of agony—and silence again. The dawn suddenly discerned. I used to lie on my back and, knowing the direction, try to see it come. It was there or not there. Like the departing sun gradually leading to complete darkness, the exact moment of its advent cannot be detected. Nocturnal beasts

must have roamed about us, but I was never disturbed.

A wild country indeed, where in the course of my tramps I saw natives gazing at me from behind trees, never having previously seen a white man, and running away as I approached.

Prior to leaving Kimberley, I had formed a little syndicate in which Rhodes, Beit, Oats, and one or two other friends and supporters, with confidence in my judgment, had taken a share. I travelled extensively along the Murchison Range and inspected most of the prospects, the Blue Jacket, the Gravelotte, French Bob's, and more that I do not recall at the moment. I took up some claims, including the Blue Jacket near the Tabina River, where the Government had established an out-station. It was a wonderful "prospect," extremely rich—*contre la nature*, as my Frenchman would have said. I gave Rhodes on my return a specimen taken from it. The lump of quartz, about the size of a coco-nut, was split in two, the fragments held together by a sheet of gold on which one could oscillate them. Before leaving the property I put my young white companion on to sink a trial shaft. Then I explored farther afield. Many of the gold reefs in that region carry antimony also, a greasy metal that, being released from the crushed ore, passes over the amalgamating plates and takes the gold with it. Metallurgy has advanced since and there are processes to deal with ore of that description, but they involve concentration and secondary treatment of an expensive kind.

Never shall I again enjoy as ecstatic a trip as that of my first visit to the Low Country. The freedom, the healthy exercise in the balmy air, absence from the problems and worries of management, and the interest of studying prospects and conditions in a picturesque land, added to the charm. I had not a trace of illness, due largely no doubt to my robust constitution, spare diet, and avoidance of alcohol. The few white men down there were careless fellows. Neither they nor I were burdened with much clothing. Serviceable boots and socks, a pair of trousers, and a flannel shirt comprised an ample wardrobe. When they crossed a river, it was their practice to go through with their clothes on and walk on until they dried. The hot sun soon enveloped them in a cloud of vapour and dissipated all the moisture. But at night that indiscretion was apt to bring on the shivers and they swallowed strong spirits as an antidote. No wonder fever and death often followed. I used always to tie my clothes on to my head and, after fording the river, dry myself before putting them on.

We always tried to find shallow places for crossing, as, although the water was beautifully clear and a swim would have been delicious, the rivers were infested with crocodiles. Whenever natives went down to a river, to get water or to cross it, they carried a tin with them and beat loudly upon it to frighten away these monsters. We naturally did likewise. Sometimes one had to pass where the trees were high and the water rather deep. Then one peered about cautiously in case one of these inimical

creatures was lurking about. Undermined banks are favourite haunts for them. To cross under those conditions always gave one a creepy sensation and a sigh of relief escaped on reaching the opposite shore. In water crocodiles move very swiftly ; on land they are not so nimble. Small native children playing incautiously near the stream have been lost by a crocodile suddenly flicking one of them in with its tail. The crocodile drowns a victim if possible without shedding blood, and tucks the corpse away in a hole under the bank until it becomes tastily high. Sometimes game, even lions, I was told, and certainly oxen, in the act of drinking, are seized by the nose and dragged in. At the broad Oliphant's River, with its many sandy islands, I have seen crocodiles sunning themselves in luxurious idleness, looking in the distance like dead boughs, no doubt watchful withal of anything edible in the stream. But I must continue my story.

After visiting every surface find that I could hear of in the vicinity, and climbing up and down a good many ugly pits, I went back to Kimberley and reported. I had spent but little money and the work I had put in hand was not costly.

Not very long afterwards I paid another visit to sum up results and give further instructions. On that occasion I was far better equipped. I took another white man along, and far more stores, tools, etc., necessitating the use of pack donkeys for their transport. Those animals are most useful in unhealthy regions, but were very troublesome, as they generally contrived to upset their load in

a most inconvenient place, and, sure as Fate, if we had freshly washed clothes, would fall into a mud hole or do something equally objectionable to us. Robert Louis Stevenson has immortalised "Modestine" in his Cevennes travels. But he had one imp only. We had six! Donkeys are really wild animals tamed—to some extent. They always want to do the *contrary*, like those tiresome souls who invariably disagree with one. To get any peace with them, you must pretend to desire the exact opposite of your real wishes. Then you may have a chance of apparent obedience: otherwise they will invariably dispute your plan. And in a savage land you must be on the watch perpetually, for pack animals have to be driven loose (unless you provide an attendant for each), and, should some zebra, giraffe, or antelope run across their path, they will forget their usual slothful mood and gallop after them.

At night too we had to build a kraal of thorn bushes to protect our donkeys, for, though they seem to entertain affectionate feelings for the species last mentioned, the carnivora have a highly developed appetite for them, so pronounced, indeed, that, in spite of our thorny barricade, a lion did on one occasion jump over it, seize one of our precious quadrupeds, and make off with it. The resulting commotion woke us up, too late, however, to exact just retribution. I did not see the occurrence, so am not able to describe it from personal observation, but have heard that lions seize small prey of that kind by the neck, break it, and leap out with the victim thrown over

their backs. Anything not too heavy is treated in that fashion by the "King of the Forest" save a human being, whose body he drags along the ground. Lions are happily not man-eaters in that country, where their food is plentiful. I understand they eat us only *faute de mieux*, as our flesh is not really palatable to them: only when old and relatively feeble—less able, therefore, to capture more agile prey—do they assuage the pangs of hunger upon us. Most wild animals and snakes, with rare exceptions, escape from man if they can. Of course, when cornered or protecting their young, they may fight. But all animals are dangerous when wounded. I was charged by a small bush-buck once when shooting on a mountain-side.

My journeys to and fro gave me a love of the Woodbush Mountain and its foothills, and, as the result of my enthusiastic accounts, my wife determined to visit it at a later date. She came back enamoured of its beauty. This led me, years later, to acquire the Westfalia and Broederstroom Estates, the former on the lower level, the latter on the heights. Were I to let my imagination have play I might exaggerate the glories of our virgin forests and waterfalls. Many years of development in "Fairyland," as my manager, C. E. Hodgson, calls it, have changed the vegetation, provided roads, and established a large herd of beef cattle on the Mountain. We also breed a few horses and can grow splendid roots and good apples there. The rainfall is enormous, averaging about ninety inches per annum. My energetic wife lived up there for many months and planted miles of oak

avenues along the roads. It is a very attractive possession.

About April, when frosts destroy the pasturage, our cattle all work their way up to the higher fences and look over the wires, demanding to know, as plainly as if they could speak, when they are to be allowed to remove to winter quarters. The gates are opened and they stream down to our farms at a lower altitude, to a new diet and a milder climate. By August, when the green grass begins to appear on the Mountain top, they look up similarly, and directly we open the gates go home. The Westfalia portion of the estate, which I presented to my elder son on his marriage, grows tropical and sub-tropical products and fruits of great variety. Imagine an area where apples thrive on the upper levels, and bananas, pineapples, citrus, mangoes, paw-paws, etc., beneath !

Good roads have also been constructed here and there by Government, and notably the splendidly surveyed route down the mountain at Magoeba's Kloof, not far from the footpath I had to take on my first journey, and very similar to a Swiss pass. The whole region is now advancing surprisingly in population and output.

I may here relate an interesting occurrence recently reported by my manager, who is an absolutely reliable man.

Last year we had a drought in that country : never before have we been similarly afflicted. Food for the cattle became scarce, and in consequence the hungry beasts all resorted to the side-streams and gullies, where a certain amount of



Proceeding from (Homestead), Northern Transvaal.

"FAIRYLAND."



green vegetation survived. But in those localities the ground is treacherous. There are boggy places and an apparently sound surface is undermined here and there by water. Animals fall in often, and, if not observed and rescued, succumb. So Mr. Hodgson had an anxious and weary time. He patrolled the camps continually, taking advantage of every moment of daylight. On his rounds, in passing along the fence of one of the paddocks, a mare whinnying excitedly dashed up to him from a depression on the hillsides leading down to the river. Suspecting something amiss, he dismounted and got through the fence. The mare meanwhile had run back to the spot from which she had emerged, and after her inspection returned to meet him. She then piloted him to the scene of trouble. Her foal had fallen into a hole and could not get out. He was able to release the imprisoned animal. Horses are reputedly stupid animals, but here is an unquestionable instance of reasoning power. I related this incident to General Smuts, who expressed his desire to send an account of it to an animal psychologist, and so I dictated it for him.

Had the mare remained by the foal, and even whinnied in her anguish, it might have been regarded as instinct, truly even then of an advanced type. But to seek help from a man, to display by the only signs at her disposal the need for assistance, surely exhibits brain capacity of a higher order.

After inspecting the work in progress and giving further instructions, I went back to Kimberley to report progress and decide upon my next step.

My term of service with the French & d'Esterre Company had expired, and I was free.

Rhodes had just acquired the concession granted in October 1888 by Lo Bengula to Messrs. C. D. Rudd, Rochfort Maguire, and F. R. Thompson, and invited me to take charge of it. I should have loved the job, but had a young wife and baby who could not be taken to that savage country. When I put this reason forward for refusing the tempting offer, Rhodes snorted and said, "Just like you fellows, hanging a millstone round your neck." He had no affection for matrimony. Subsequently he induced Dr. Jameson to give up his practice and undertake the task. He could not have made a better choice, for the Doctor had all the required love of adventure, a dauntless courage, and a happy knack of dealing with men. Mr. Colvin in his biography does full justice to his charm, his talents, and his intrepid character. Jameson's persuasive skill in dealing with deputations and awkward petitioners was astounding. Such folks generally left his presence satisfied with a refusal ! He convinced them that their demands were unreasonable, that they did not really want them, and that, if conceded, they would be rather injurious than beneficial to them. A characteristic story, to portray the man, may be sandwiched in here. In a fight with the Kaffirs he rode in front of his troops, a dangerous proceeding. When remonstrated with, he retorted, " If I am in front, they will all aim at me and all miss ; while if I ride behind, I may be hit by accident."

But to resume my theme. The Witwatersrand

Goldfield suddenly leapt into renown. Discoveries had been made at various points over a distance of many miles. The formation ran east and west and nearly in a straight line. A tremendous gamble set in, culminating in a boom which began in November 1888 and ended in January 1889. It was succeeded in March 1889 by the inevitable crash and slump. Messrs. Wernher, Beit & Company had established the firm of H. Eckstein & Company at Johannesburg, which had acquired a limited interest in the new field. Beit offered me the position of adviser in mining matters to that firm. At the same time I was invited to become manager of the Randfontein Estate. I accepted Beit's offer, having had business connections with him over a good many years and of a very satisfactory nature, as well as social relations of the most cordial and intimate kind.

Of all the men I had become acquainted with at Kimberley, none was more genial and kind, none more brilliant in capacity, more bold in enterprise, or more genuinely respected and admired than Alfred Beit. His intelligence was keen and his power of decision great as it was rapid. He and his partner, Julius Wernher, were, as business men, a unique combination. Beit had the gift of quite unusual insight, coupled with boldness of action, while Wernher had a calmer, colder, and safer judgment. Many a time during the period that preceded the consummation of the scheme for amalgamating the diamond mines, Beit bought huge holdings of various mining shares to hasten the hour of control, taking big

risks, risks that Wernher deemed too great for their capital (comparatively large as it was even then), and in consequence, without complaining or damping the eager enthusiasm of his partner, he sold out at good profits all with which he deemed it prudent to part. Rhodes could never have achieved what he did at Kimberley nor in Rhodesia without Beit, and Beit in turn might have landed himself in terrible financial troubles but for the wise head, the cool judgment, and the clear vision of Wernher. The great, and I think the decisive, part played by Beit on the diamond fields, and in a very wide sphere besides, has never been adequately appreciated or recognised. His humanity and generosity were known only to a few of us in the inner circle.

At the time of which I am writing (1888) little practical work had been done on the Rand, and I was engaged to organise and supervise some systematic development. Up to the end of that year only 266,000 oz. of gold had been won. No one at that time knew whether the indications were purely superficial or not, and the importance of the field was so little esteemed that it was to be part of my duty to superintend the operations in the Low Country, over two hundred miles away, as well as those at the Witwatersrand. I shall devote a space later on to the gradual dawn of faith in the greatest gold field of the world and to its romantic and phenomenal rise. Meanwhile I shall refer to a few points leading up to the climax.

Before taking up my new appointment, I went



*Photo by]*

MR. ALFRED BEIT (LONDON, 1894).

*[Ernest Mills.*



to England with my family, and there my second son was born in April 1888. It was the first visit of my wife to England and of course created great excitement in the family circle. Our old nurse, who appeared on the scene to welcome "Master Lionel" and his wife, exclaimed in rather astonished tones as we entered the house, "Why, she is not black!" My wife was highly amused. I need not spend time in recording commonplace details of our trip, which resembled no doubt that of thousands of oversea country cousins.

In due course we returned to Kimberley to make preparations for our transplantation to our new sphere of activity. Being quite a party with children and nurse, we hired one of the regular coaches plying in the passenger service, which secured for us relays at the usual stages. Although the journey was fatiguing, we covered the distance, about 320 miles, without mishap or any untoward incident in four or five days.

A comfortable house was provided for us. It was named "Hohenheim" by Hermann Eckstein, who had built it in remembrance of a treasured place in his native land. There was a house next to it occupied by one of the partners of the firm, J. B. Taylor. The site had nothing attractive about it. It was flat and the view uninteresting, just the veld gradually rising to a ridge of shale about half a mile distant. It had, however, the recommendation of being only about half a mile from the Corner House, then a two-storied building containing the offices of the firm.

Excitement, energy, and activity reigned in the

town and along the scattered mines. A good deal of the money, and many of the men, came from the diamond fields, or those associated with them. Benefiting by Kimberley experience, most of the buildings were of wood and iron. The flimsy canvas house and the tent were uncommon. Everything came from the coast to Kimberley, or to the terminus of the Free State or Natal lines of railway, and thence by ox or mule transport. The Market Square was a replica of its prototype at Kimberley. Hotels were springing up in all directions like the flowering stems of aloes—single- and double-storied wood and iron structures, always overcrowded with rows of men sleeping on the floors, or in shake-down beds, as best they might. There was lots of drink, sketchy food, dirt and discomfort, but hope and enthusiasm were dominant, with the usual plethora of incredible yarns of finds, fortunes, and other far-fetched fables. There were no roads, but the torn-up tracks in the red soil belched volumes of dust in the breeze and turned into quagmires in the rain. I remember crossing Commissioner Street in wet weather and sinking into mud over my topboots. Most of us did our outdoor work on horseback and during heavy storms had to look out for gullies, holes, and boggy places.

The climate was glorious and far less harsh than that of Griqualand West. The altitude was between 5,500 and 6,000 feet above sea-level. The champagne atmosphere strung one up to feats of endurance, not without expense to the nervous system, and this manifested itself in

different forms if sustained too long. Men with robust constitutions who do not eat or drink too much, and lead steady lives generally, can bear an amazing amount of strain without apparent ill effect, but living at a high altitude imposes extra work upon the heart, and everyone so situated benefits by a periodical sojourn at the sea-level. The human body accommodates itself so speedily to abnormal conditions that after a short time the increased rate of breathing, under physical effort, diminishes. Athletes, duly acclimatised, perform feats of agility and stamina as efficiently as at low levels. The generation born in Johannesburg is vigorous and well knit. Thus a height of 6,000 feet is not necessarily injurious. The question of longevity cannot yet be confidently settled. I suppose the effect of altitude resembles the action of poisons in the respect that the system requires gradual education to accommodate itself to large doses. But we know poisons, excepting as antidotes to disease, cannot be of benefit to the race, while rarefied air may in time produce larger and more powerful vital organs. Nature, of course, gradually fits every species to the environment and conditions in which it is born and nurtured.

Fortunately the town, following the Dutch custom, was well laid out in broad thoroughfares, at right angles, and trees were soon planted between the sections respectively destined for roadways and footpaths. These grew at an incredible rate. The common blue gum was much favoured and it shot up, throwing out many well-leaved branches in its early life, and was therefore some shield

against the wind and dust. Variety was provided by pines and cypruses, as well as beefwoods and pepper trees, favoured in the more arid climate of Kimberley, where all vegetation is stunted and struggles for existence in the thin layer of soil that usually lies upon the calcareous tufa beneath.

As in all new places where population assembles rapidly, speed in the construction of dwellings was of supreme moment. Speculation in real estate set in, which had the effect of scattering the buildings very much. Some owners built at once, some held their stands as a venture. All sorts of sheds and shanties sprang into being like mushrooms and were dotted about, nestling sometimes against more pretentious neighbours. Here and there brickwork broke the grey monotony of the shiny galvanised iron. The roofs, glittering in the sun, were all of that material. Architectural-taste was entirely absent. Its first symptoms appeared in dormer windows and scalloped boards introduced here and there for decorative purposes. Fences to define the boundaries of stands were made mostly of deal, the uprights and top-rail connected by collapsible lattice in panels, painted of course. Later on roofs were often painted—a great relief to eyesight, if not always in colour equally agreeable to æsthetic taste. Even to this day, in unfavoured quarters, blocks of early structures survive, and occasionally a single-storied hovel still has the impertinence to dwell between two imposing edifices. Squalor and splendour cheek by jowl. I will not burden the reader with too much detail. Internal decoration naturally

only came in stages, as well as anything approaching comfort in appointments, furniture, and utensils.

Water was very scarce and had to be carted from the northern edge of the range, facing the Magaliesberg Hills, a distance of a couple of miles, or obtained from surface wells. In times of drought the scarcity became a real hardship. I remember an instance in the early nineties, amusing in itself and a good example of the ruling conditions. Sir Jacobus de Wet, the British Agent, was on a visit with his daughter from Pretoria. They were staying at a well-known hostelry. A drought was raging and baths were cut off. Miss de Wet, feeling very uncomfortable and discontented too, no doubt (for Pretoria enjoys an abundant supply of water), was wandering round the hotel and suddenly spied a bath half-filled with clear water in an empty room. She slipped in, locked the door, and proceeded to bathe. During the operation there was a furious knocking at the door, to which she paid no heed. Cleaner in body and refreshed in spirit, she attired herself and emerged to find the infuriated proprietor on the threshold. "Do you know what you have done?" said he. "You have used the only water we had for drinking," and added, "What is worse still, you have used soap"!!!

Life was less harsh than it was in the early days of the diamond fields, but in some respects it had a familiar resemblance. There was no basis as a rule for selecting medical advisers or dentists other than the letters that adorned and followed their names. It takes time for the excel-

lence of practitioners to become established and diplomas are not always a safe guide. Jack Currie, an esteemed resident, gave me a striking example of the terrible consequences attending the indiscriminate selection of a dentist. He was driven by a furious toothache into an unknown dentist's chair. With the victim safely imprisoned in that imposing contrivance, so well known to all of us, the dentist set to work. Jack said he thought, after a bit, that the drill had reached his brain, and at that critical (and excruciating) moment the performer said : "This is a most delicate operation. I shall have to charge you two guineas!" There were of course highly skilled men on the fields. The trouble was to find them.

As in the early days of Kimberley, the population was almost exclusively male. It remained predominantly so for a few years. Then a sprinkling of the fair sex graced the scene and brought in its train greater comfort and more refined manners and habits. A small dance became possible, and the men lined up in a double row, through which the ladies had to work their way under a combined attack for the favour of a few steps at the shrine of Terpsichore. They were put upon a pedestal by the superabundant male, and no wonder their heads were turned. From the giddy heights they gazed down upon him with warmth, scorn, or indifference, as the inclination dictated. A dame or a damsel in those days did in fact "bestride the world as a Colossus." The sparsity of competition exaggerated their charms. But with time, rarity diminished, and with it the eminence

on which they dwelt subsided until, as in settled communities, their dainty feet rested on the level ground to their own and to the benefit of the male sex.

Let us turn for a moment from the new-comers to glance at the older population. The Boers as a whole are a very self-respecting people, endowed with much natural dignity, fine physique, and an ingrained tendency to treat the stranger with kindness. In the old days hospitality was offered to the wayfarer as a matter of course. The original settlers from Holland and the Low Countries, mostly petty officials and seafaring people, belonged to a less-cultured class than the Huguenot refugees who settled at the Cape in large numbers. To-day the French ancestry of a considerable proportion of the Boer population is distinguishable in their names (corrupted in pronunciation) and in their cast of features. Although the French language was suppressed and has quite disappeared, many of the attributes of that race persist.

Holding in view these characteristics, it is not surprising that invasion of the Transvaal by *uitlanders* was anathema to the backveld Boer. Life for him and his forbears had been wild and hard. With courage that must command respect, he had loaded up his goods and chattels and with his family pushed into unknown regions. There he had to rely upon Providence for sustenance, and his strong right arm to combat unfriendly savages and ferocious beasts. In my rides about the veld I met men who, in their younger days, had had to clothe themselves in skins. They possessed a

general knowledge of untamed nature, and were hardy pioneers, but had no education in agricultural or pastoral pursuits beyond that of a limited experience. Of diseases affecting live stock or products of the soil they were in complete ignorance. The provision of the bare necessities of life comprised their sole occupation, and but for the abundance of game they must have perished.

Slowly and painfully they conquered unfriendly tribes and extracted a precarious harvest from a rather capricious soil. In a propitious season abundance rewarded their efforts. In a bad season they ran the risk of famine. They scattered themselves over wide areas, and there were no centres of population within reach to absorb the surplus in times of plenty or to supply the deficiency in times of stringency. It is not remarkable, therefore, that they limited their labour and relied upon a higher power to provide their needs. Thus, if a pest came, it was the will of God. Their habits became slothful, their manners naturally rude and rough. They were subsequently pursued by the ruthless advance of southern civilisation, and resented it. They had established a primitive form of republican government, but the laws were crude, and obedience to them was considered optional—that is to say, most men were a law unto themselves.

So pronounced was the Boer dislike and fear of the new-comers and their lack of confidence in their own power to deal with them, that they divested themselves of a part of their own freehold rights to induce the Government to act

on their behalf. That is how it came about that the first provision of the mining law read, "The right to mine for minerals belongs to the State." The minerals were the property of the farmers—the right to mine them was voluntarily handed over to the State for half the licence moneys, surrendered as compensation. Since then the State has steadily encroached until it has almost usurped the position of the freehold owner. That comes of inviting the State to manage one's affairs. In those days the predatory instincts of Governments were not highly developed. Owners of property possessed it in reality. Thus the action of the Transvaal farmers in voluntarily and needlessly parting with a share of their rights—seeing it was the duty of the State to keep order and guarantee the sanctity of contracts—is the more extraordinary, and is evidence of their simplicity. The fact is they were ignorant of the ways of the world, and their unconscious generosity was due to that cause.

With growing democratic and socialistic tendencies, measures of a confiscatory kind are commonly regarded as normal. The moral laxity that refuses to distinguish between *meum* and *tuum*, if not checked, will hereafter impose a terrible penalty upon the nation that blindly pursues it. But that is another story and may be dilated upon later on.

The budding city was expanding rapidly and, though the buildings were much scattered over portions of the farms Turffontein and Doornfontein, building sites were in demand farther afield.

H. Eckstein & Company had bought the farm Braamfontein, believing no doubt that minerals might be found there. The early years of development disclosed the doubtfulness of that result, and, as it was evident that timber would be needed for the mines, it was decided to establish a plantation there. An expert from the Black Forest was engaged, and a large acreage put under gums and pines. My chief gave it the title of the "Sachsenwald." The growth was astounding, the common blue gum attaining a height of fifty feet in five years. In that period it is fibrous and useless. It takes at least ten years for a tree to be worth cutting, and during the second quinquennium its energy is concentrated upon increase in girth and solidity rather than on the lengthening of its stem. The miniature forest was divided into blocks with intervening open spaces, intended as firebreaks, and very shortly equestrians were able to enjoy a morning canter in the shady avenues. It became a popular resort in that treeless land—a Bois de Boulogne on a smaller scale.

The rest of the farm, on the higher level and nearer to the centre of Johannesburg, was laid out in large stands, each 150 by 300 feet, which were eagerly bought up by those who desired to have space for a garden and the amenities of a croquet ground or tennis court round their houses. This locality is still the most favoured and fashionable district. The property had been vested in a public company, and the partners of H. Eckstein & Company, foreseeing the probability of its speedy development, pur-

chased and presented to the municipality a large area for public purposes. This was called the Eckstein Park, and in consequence, no doubt, the adjoining growing township was designated Park Town. Gradually the City Fathers created a Zoological Garden and very creditable pleasure-grounds in the Park which have proved a boon and a great attraction, especially upon holidays, to the citizens of Johannesburg.

It is interesting to recall the days of the embryo plantation, when only two small houses, regarded as country residences, situated on the flat, just outside its boundary on the south side, faced the little bushes that have become trees of a reasonable stature.

The railway was being pushed up from the Cape Colony, and the site of the terminus had been selected just in front of the houses occupied by J. B. Taylor and myself. It became evident that the vicinity of the line would render our houses too noisy for comfort. The first train entered the Park Station on September 15th, 1892. My family was increased in December 1890 by the addition of a daughter, and it became necessary to provide a more commodious house. The town was spreading at an amazing pace, and I decided to build our new home farther afield. My wife was then an enthusiastic rider, and in the course of her explorations on horseback lighted upon a charming site about two miles to the north of Hohenheim. I was of course taken to inspect the great discovery and was enraptured with it. The view was splendid, on the edge of the high plateau

where the sedimentary sandstones and shales suddenly end in steep kopjes leading down towards the granite base on which the Witwatersrand reposes. The term "White Water's Ridge" was applied to it by the *voortrekkers*, because crystal streams flow from it at various spots east and west. Looking north over a great expanse of undulating plains, one commanded the whole Magaliesburg Range, about forty miles away, with the hills of Pretoria away on the right, soon to be turned into forts, and a sea of land on the left towards the future town of Krugersdorp. It was certainly the most picturesque prospect in the vicinity.

But rather formidable obstacles stood in the way of building. No road existed, and though the veld itself in dry weather is soon hardened by wheeled traffic into a passable road, there was one stiffish rise to surmount with a ridge of hard shale to cut through at its apex. That was a small matter, however, compared with the difficulties close to the site. There the sandstones, through the ages, were fast being transformed into quartzites, very rough and hard material to tackle. A flying survey between a gap in the kopje disclosed a turn to the right on a shelf. Proceeding along this for a quarter of a mile, a plateau of about twenty acres is reached. Here we decided to erect the new Hohenheim, far more appropriately named in its new position. The clearing of that road was rather a big job and involved a good deal of blasting, but it was accomplished and the house was proceeded with. A ridge of rock protected us from the bitter winds that blow straight up from

the Antarctic and are the advance guard of the rainy season in summer. The position was certainly isolated. The nearest dwellings were the two houses at the edge of the plantation already referred to, but, although only perhaps half a mile distant as the crow flies, these could only be reached by a détour of a couple of miles, and Johannesburg was almost equally far away.

During the construction people used to ride out to inspect progress, and though the scenic merits were undeniable and were therefore applauded, the remote situation was voted dangerous, and the whole project was christened "Phillips's Folly." My wife and I had many a laugh over this designation. The fact is in those days confidence in the industry was slender, as will be demonstrated shortly when the rise of the great gold field is dealt with, and the faith displayed by us in building a house of some size was regarded as ill founded. We could not then combat the general opinion respecting the mining prospects, but determined to break down the absurd prejudice as to the situation being dangerous. We therefore chose a moonless night for a house-warming and invited all our acquaintances. No one refused to come out of fear of traversing the road, and after that the talk of perils died away.

We lived at the new Hohenheim and had many happy days and much gaiety there. Under my wife's supervision the gardens flourished, and everyone who visited us in daylight was loud in praise of the unique surroundings. My stay there ended abruptly with the Jameson Raid, of which I shall

speak later on. Hohenheim is now a much-prized possession of the General Hospital. It was generously purchased by Sir Otto Beit and presented for the use of convalescent patients. The pure air out there hastens their recovery and the thirty or forty beds available relieve the pressure in the main institution. Sir Otto, younger brother of Mr. Alfred Beit, was associated with the firm in Johannesburg for some years. His public spirit, and support of objects calculated to benefit mankind in many directions, accord with the traditions and wealth inherited from his brother. He is deservedly popular and respected. The intimate friendship that had its origin in our connection on the Rand is, I am happy to say, firmly established.

As soon as the merits of our new site became generally acknowledged a great demand for stands in the vicinity ensued, and every plot between Hohenheim and Johannesburg was sold very freely. Such is the effect of well-chosen example, and the criticism showered upon us when we selected our site is the common experience of pioneers. To do anything first is always wrong in the eyes of those who never lead.

Having given a slight sketch of the urban development during the first three or four years of our residence in Johannesburg, I shall now speak of the mineral side, with some reference to the great rise in values as confidence in the Rand became established. It seems like a dream to look back upon that period of my career.

## CHAPTER V

### THE RAND—PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL

**N**ATURE is probably no less romantic in her treatment of the inanimate than the animate, but, before the reader embarks upon this chapter, it is fair to warn him that the first portion describes the aqueous origin of the Witwatersrand, with some references to gold deposition, methods of extracting it, and other cognate subjects. There will, however, emerge an interesting story of fortunes missed and made.

In September 1889 no one had any strong faith in the permanence of the auriferous beds. The prophet who had ventured to predict that in less than thirty years hundreds of millions sterling would be won, and a large city established, would have been laughed at as a harmless lunatic. This fact leads to the natural enquiry as to the respective parts which luck and capacity play in our lives. In ordinary affairs intelligence and industry unquestionably hold the key to success, but in a new field of enterprise, dependent upon the gifts of Nature, where the book is sealed and its contents can only be discovered by opening the covers, laboriously cutting the pages and studying them, I think luck rules. Otherwise the cleverest people would always be the most successful, which is not

the case. The adventurous spirit is always an asset, but if, acting upon an inspiration that proves erroneous, we plunge in a given direction, failure is inevitable. Upon the Witwatersrand gold fields nature was prodigal, and hence those with faith in its future prospered.

The work of the pioneer, the early prospector, had been done in 1886, 1887, and 1888. He had traversed the line of outcrop and had sampled it. His ways were primitive. Breaking off a piece of the exposed blanket, he pounded it up in a mortar and transferred the powder to his prospecting dish, a metal vessel resembling in shape and size a washhand basin. The bottom was flat and the sides joined it at a sharp angle. Oscillating the crushed rock in water, he gradually rejected the lighter material until only about a tablespoonful remained, and by a swirling movement the tail of gold, if present, was exposed. This was estimated by its length and bulk at a given yield per ton. Not accurate, of course, but quite sufficiently informative to denote richness, payability, or poverty. If he thought the prospects good enough, he pegged out a few claims on the line of outcrop and usually sold them for a mere trifle. It is a sad reflection that men of that type generally derive so little from their researches. Here at their feet was wealth beyond the dreams of avarice, unrecognised and unheeded. There was no confidence in the length of life or stability of the discoveries. By the end of 1889, however, a single row of claims was pegged out wherever the surface indications were favourable, and in some

specially rich localities, but only here and there, a second row was taken, more as a precaution than with any conviction they would be worked. How absurd it seems to-day, when one can walk on the surface to the south for a mile or two over the precious beds that have been followed down on the incline into the bowels of the earth as much as 6,500 feet underfoot.

In those days there were still large gaps where the outcrop was hidden by overlying soil. The river theory of a limited alluvial deposit still held sway, and in the cases of such occurrences the metallic contents are usually found in distinct channels. It is not surprising, therefore, that “the tide in the affairs of man” was not seized.

By the time I settled in Johannesburg quite a lot of work, mostly of an amateur and inferior character, had been done. Some small batteries were at work. In 1887 there were produced 35,000 ounces, in 1888 231,000 ounces, and in 1889 379,700 ounces of gold. Very rich material only was thought worth working. Perhaps I should here explain that near the surface the beds had been oxidised, and a certain amount of what is technically known as secondary enrichment had taken place. So a yield of one, two, or more ounces per ton was by no means exceptional. To-day we work ore that yields, throughout the Rand, only about one-third of an ounce.

We will now peer into the geological and chemical marvels that made the Rand, as even an elementary survey of so prodigious a natural performance is worth a little study.

Imagine an inland sea with an irregular line of cliffs. Its boundaries are not defined precisely even to-day, but, broadly speaking, it must have covered an area of 5,000 square miles or more. The waves dashing against the enclosing rocks, aided by rain, wind, and changes of temperature, tore the latter down and spread them fairly evenly over the bottom. Quartz cliffs produced, of course, quartz fragments, and by a process of attrition under the water these fragments were rounded, the detritus from them filling the crevices in the bed. Having demolished the quartz, the waves met with and attacked sandstone, which was broken down and formed another bed or layer. Then, alternately swallowing up more quartz and more sandstone as encountered, the sea deposited the whole Witwatersrand series. Imagine (the unimaginable!) the flight of time that saw a thickness of ten or twelve miles of layers so arranged. Gold is found only in the conglomerate, or quartz pebble beds, called by the Boers "blanket," a Dutch word signifying "almond rock." In appearance it certainly does resemble that succulent compound, but no teeth, present or prehistoric, could bite into a thick slice of it!

The northern shore of the sea contains the wonderful beds that have made the Rand famous. They extend for a distance of between sixty and seventy miles, of which the central portion of about forty miles runs east and west. At each end they curve to the south, and in those sections the Modderfontein group at the eastern end and the Randfontein group at the western end are situated. The line,

however, is neither straight nor unbroken. Long after the beds had been laid down and solidified, gigantic disturbances took place. Hundreds of miles of country were upheaved, probably at various times. The lift may have been regular, like a huge Atlantic swell, but the subsidence dropped the stupendous load with a crash, causing it to crack and break into fragments. These were separated and distorted. They did not fit together like pieces of a broken china vessel. Through the cracks rose molten rock that cooled into what are called dykes. These vary from a few to hundreds of feet in thickness. Displacements also took place of another kind called faults, which detached two portions of the bed, sometimes merely tearing them assunder, sometimes actually sliding one portion behind the other. This is called in mining an overlap.

So the line, which does maintain a straight course in general terms, is considerably thrown about in detail. Thousands of tons were pitched about like skittles by forces which our perceptions cannot begin to imagine, causing upthrows, downthrows, and horizontal movements. The earth in a state of agitation compared with which eruptions of Vesuvius, or earthquakes known to history, are quite secondary affairs. Rents in the earth's crust, fumes of metals volatilised and chemical gases filling the air, fluid minerals in great gushes flowing into the cavities at temperatures unrecordable. Nothing animal or vegetable could have survived in that environment.

On the southern shore repose isolated patches

like the Nigel Mine and a series of smaller propositions at or near Potchcfstroom and Klerksdorp.

There are many quartz pebble beds which it is unnecessary to count, but Nature has consistently enriched only two of them, which constitute the Rand field. Why so partial an endowment? Perhaps the Cornish dictum applies here, as of gold elsewhere in the world: "Where it is, there it is." No explanation can be given. Certain formations are known to be associated with certain metals—granite with tin, for instance—but gold may be found anywhere. The lay reader would find no interest in a dissertation upon the North Reef, the Kimberley series, or the Black Reef, all of which in spots have been profitably worked. Hundreds of miles of conglomerates have been proved to exist. Only a very limited number contain enough gold to pay the cost of its extraction. On the Rand proper, what are called the South Reef and the Main Reef Leader are the backbone of the industry: the Main Reef itself (a compact and much thicker bed) is worked in places, but is usually too poor to pay expenses.

How did the gold get in? That is a question put to nearly everyone who takes a stranger underground. No one, of course, *knows*, since the Rand was made hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of years ago. In age it is said to rank with the early Devonian period of England. Two theories have been put forward. The infiltration theory, i.e. the introduction of the metal after the beds were laid down, and the sea-beach theory, i.e. the gold being *in situ* when the sea broke down and distri-

buted the cliffs. I believe the greater weight of professional opinion to-day inclines to the second theory, but I have neither the desire nor the knowledge to enter the lists in that sometimes fierce and probably indeterminable controversy.

It may be of general interest to say that all metals originate as fumes expelled by the liquid contents of the earth from that gradually cooling cauldron whose contraction causes earthquakes, subsidences, and upheavals, and whether the fumes become gold, silver, tin, copper, or any other metal depends entirely upon the treatment they meet with in their ascent. The acquaintances they make in their travels and the heat and pressure to which they are subjected determine their character. Beside Nature's laboratory, the works of man are trifling, in spite of the march of science. We may succeed in, say, degenerating gold into silver, or radium into lead, but it is scarcely credible that we shall perform the reverse feat of turning silver into gold or lead into radium. It is similar with natural springs. Nature divides the chemical constituents so finely that the waters are infinitely more potent than those we can produce by mixing artificially the same quantity of a salts in the same volume of water. A dose of water at the Hungarian springs, containing by analysis the quantity of arsenic that a doctor would prescribe, would, I am told, be fatal, because the fine division of particles in the natural water enables the system to absorb the whole of the poison, while in our less refined mixture they are relatively coarse and hence are only partially assimilated.

In chemistry, substances have their likes and dislikes much as human beings. We meet a stranger. Our feelings are generally indifferent, or shall I say neutral? Sometimes we are violently attracted or equally violently repelled. But until our relations are of a most intimate character, our impressions are based upon a rather unsound foundation. They owe their existence to some subtle influence that cannot be analysed. Our senses may easily make a blunder in their initial estimate. Chemical decisions are entirely different in that respect. They are definite. Gold, for instance, rising as fumes and meeting chlorine becomes chloride of gold, and would cool down in the presence of moisture as a yellow liquid. Bring that liquid into contact with a solution of sulphate of iron, and the chlorine, having a greater affinity for iron than for gold, links up as chloride of iron and deposits the gold. In Nature no doubt that process often occurs, and as gold in the Rand measures is always found side by side with and actually in particles of iron, this may well have been the *modus operandi*. In recovering the gold from the crushed rock, we imitate Nature. But I shall speak of extraction later on. Human beings, having taken up partners, are not allowed such vagrant exchanges upon meeting tempting affinities, though, in that respect, humanity seems to be following the chemical example more commonly than in my young days.

Rambling molecules are always in danger of being split up. There is indeed only one hope for them, namely, to choose new company with the utmost

care, or to live in monklike seclusion. Otherwise, in indiscriminate roaming, they will be assuredly torn asunder and their component atoms find their status radically changed. They may start out acid and in the twinkling of an eye become alkaline or neutral. And the laws of eternal change that govern their movements act without any awkward preliminaries or heated arguments, though heat is always generated during the process of exchange. No half-measures or compromises are ever resorted to, and in their transformation no heed is paid to the consequences imposed upon the deserted companion.

As I have been dealing with the vagaries of atoms and molecules, it may be fitting here to describe the processes in vogue for winning the gold from the rock. It is hardly worth while to speak of the early defective practices, when much of the precious metal was left in the "tailings," or waste, most of which was saved and re-treated. The ore leaves the mine in a rough state, large pieces weighing a hundred pounds or more, mixed with small lumps and powdered material. This is hauled to the surface and screened, the fines going into one compartment and thence direct to the stamp battery; the coarse is passed through rock breakers and reduced to the size of road macadam. From the rock breakers it is fed automatically on to travelling rubber belts. These convey it to the mill, but *en route* it is sprayed clean, and a gang of Kaffirs along the belt sort out any waste rock visible. The stamps reduce all the ore to a fairly fine state, until it passes, in a modern plant,

through a screen which has about twenty holes to the square inch. It flows from the screen over copper plates coated with mercury, which forms an amalgam (similar in appearance to the substance spread on glass to make mirrors) which has a mechanical attraction for gold and seizes all the released metallic particles. Then the finely ground material is passed into tube mills, large revolving cylinders which reduce the fineness still further, and at the outflow more plates catch specks of gold that were not uncovered in the battery.

But although at this second stage the ore is ground very fine, almost as fine as flour or face-powder, the particles of ore are still coarse enough to surround particles of gold. To secure them, chemistry comes into service. The fine ore is again classified into sands and slime (the latter being an impalpable powder), and is separated and collected in vats where a weak solution of cyanide of sodium is applied. The cyanogen combines with the gold and releases the sodium, which combines with the water, leaving a solution of cyanide of gold which is passed over zinc shavings or dust, and, in turn, the cyanogen drops the gold and links up with the zinc. Chemical preferences pay no regard to our ideas of value ! The gold drops to the bottom and is collected ready for melting.

I will not burden the reader with the minor changes in practice that have been introduced, or with the particulars in detail of appliances used in the shape of distributors, methods of settlement, filter presses, blanket strakes, neutralising acids,

and so forth, because I am only attempting to give a general outline of the subject.

The plant required covers acres of space and costs hundreds of thousands of pounds to install. All the enormous equipment has a very delicate job to perform. It has, roughly, to seek out and to catch one particle of gold in one hundred thousand particles of waste! And with modern methods 95 per cent. to 97 per cent. of the gold is extracted. Think what it means in a big mine, like the Crown Mines for instance. Millions have been spent upon the mine and machinery. Over 200,000 tons a month are handled, each ton in 1923 worth only 27s. at the standard price of gold, gained at a cost of 19s. 6d., leaving a profit of about 7s. 6d. per ton. In such a mine about 16,000 natives and 1,900 white men gain their livelihood. This will afford some idea of the big business of "manufacturing" gold and the catastrophic effects of the contraction or extinction of the industry to Johannesburg and to South African general prosperity.

I have now endeavoured to convey some idea of the Witwatersrand deposits and their treatment. When, in ages gone by, the upheaval or upheavals were in progress, no living thing could have survived.

I have said enough respecting the broken structure of the beds to show that great skill is needed in directing the operations underground. The mining engineer has not only to calculate what tricks Nature has played with the valuable material he seeks, but has to grapple with an immense variety of problems concerning ventilation, pumping,

labour control, stores consumption, and transport. I soon began to appreciate my own limitations. I had had a good practical training at Kimberley in handling men, sinking pits, and in shifting and handling large quantities of rock. I had also studied surveying and Callon's Lectures, fitting myself in some respects for general mining work; but of scientific geology, metallurgy, and the higher branches of mining engineering I possessed but a scanty equipment. My knowledge of appliances for recovering diamonds was valueless.

Happily, within three months of my arrival our staff was strengthened by the arrival of Mr. Hennen Jennings, an American engineer of eminence. He was a man of high moral principles and used meticulous care in securing and marshalling facts. He had been manager of the El Calloa Mine in Venezuela—a very rich mine whose career ended owing to hot springs producing temperatures which, in spite of shifts of twenty minutes underground and heads swathed in cloths dipped in iced water, defeated the miners! He was not a quick thinker, and to get an opinion out of him was like trying to open an oyster without the requisite implement. But he was a lovable man who, with his charming wife, soon gained the affection and respect of everyone. He remained Consultant on the Rand until June 1898, being then transferred to the offices of Messrs. Wernher, Beit & Company in London, where he served in the same capacity until 1905. News of his subsequent death, after he retired to his native land, came to me as a true grief.

Many other engineers and geologists of note visited

the Rand. Gardner Williams had inspected and expressed non-committal views upon the prospects. These men had a wide experience of gold mining and had heard of auriferous conglomerate beds in Spain which had not proved of enduring value. Hence they were sceptical about the future or, if they entertained a hopeful view, were disinclined to express it without more evidence. Professional men with their reputations to lose will not prophesy. They very sagely argue that a client will never be seriously dissatisfied at missing something that turns out well. He may and does regret it, but absolves his technical adviser who thought the visible indications too precarious. He takes quite another view if he is induced to involve himself in a venture that fails and costs him dearly. Engineers who make rash prognostications and charlatans who pretend to look into the ground, all those men, in fact, who allow fees to mould their opinions, have brought the distinguished profession into disrepute in popular esteem. The cautious engineer reports only upon ascertained facts, with some comments possibly upon his reading of the tendencies based upon accumulated experience. He never pretends to assess a value upon the unseen.

The faith of my firm was not strong, as evinced by my instructions to supervise and control operations on the Rand and in the Low Country (Zoutpansberg, over two hundred miles away) as well, accessible only by slow animal transport. By the light of subsequent events what a fantastic office this was ! After examining the indications carefully,

I was haunted by a firm belief, intuitive rather than reasoned, in the future of the gold mines, and soon displayed my faith by writing to my friends in England that I intended to stay on the Rand and abandon all idea of devoting attention to the Low Country. I began pegging out large numbers of claims for the firm. This had to be done with caution, because one could peg only a small number of claims (ten, I think) in one name, and I felt assured, if our firm were known to be acquiring large holdings, it would act as the signal for many persons, without themselves enjoying the same expectations, to follow suit in the hope of selling them at a profit to us, or to others. The operation was simple. One could peg out by power of attorney. Names were abundantly available for a very small consideration, with transfer deeds, so I had no difficulty in accumulating a great number of claims without any information leaking out as to ownership.

To show how people despised the prospects, I will give one example. Next to what became the great Robinson Mine, H. Eckstein & Company bought a half share in a block of twelve claims in January 1889. The other half was held by one Jacob Langerman, who claimed the whole block. A settlement was reached during the next few months by which each claimant retained his half share and the firm was given the power to deal with the whole block. Subsequently Langerman wished to dispose of his interest for £10,000 and approached me in the matter. Eckstein himself was in England. I examined the

locality and strongly urged the partner in charge to make the necessary purchase. He declined, upon the ground that the Rand was not in popular favour, the times were bad, and the firm did not wish to increase its commitments. The merits of the opportunity appealed to me as so good that I sought and received his permission to do the business myself.

I had not at that time £10,000, and therefore induced one of my Kimberley friends, who was visiting Johannesburg at the time, to put up most of the required money, fearing otherwise that the chance might be lost. He was a participant in my little syndicate formed to operate in the Low Country. I had the block accurately surveyed and beaconed. The twelve claims dwindled under that process to 10·819. Then other participants were admitted. Being satisfied that my judgment was correct, I allowed the claims to be called the Lionel Phillips block. I may say this was the only occasion upon which I gave my name to a block of claims. Rhodes and Oats both had a share in it.

The Bonanza Gold Mining Company, Limited, was floated to acquire the whole undertaking on May 2nd, 1894, for £200,000, of which £75,000 was working capital. It ultimately paid in dividends £1,325,000 under the management of my old friend Francis Spencer. £662,500 for £10,000 is not bad business (the firm having the other half share), but we did not ourselves benefit in full, lacking the confidence to hold our shares until the date of exhaustion. At rising prices

we sold a portion of them from time to time. This demonstrates how faith in the industry was a growth the extent of which was not appreciated by any of us. The early companies, floated before I lived in Johannesburg, whose capitalisation was on a very modest scale, were suspect in the popular mind as doubtful ventures.

The river theory, i.e. the assumption that the deposit was bounded by river banks of an indefinite and perhaps a very restricted distance apart, fortunately for my firm, flourished for a long time, for while it persisted general confidence in the future was very limited. The sanguine believers were limited in number and the professional pundits reserved in their opinions.

The Bonanza Mine reminds me of the accident to my friend Spencer, from which, amazingly, he escaped unhurt. The shaft was under repair at one of the upper levels, and he had gone down to see that his instructions were being correctly observed. Having completed his inspection, he stepped, by some aberration, into the open compartment instead of into that in which the cage awaited him. Between him and the bottom of the shaft gaped 300 or 400 feet. He fell about 40 feet, and found himself straddle-legged upon a pile of ceiling boards (stacked by the men upon the heavy timber framework supporting the sides of the shaft), to which he clung. The men began slowly descending the ladderway, expecting to find his mangled body at the bottom of the shaft. What was their surprise on hearing him shout,

“Why the hell are you so slow?” When they rescued him and brought him to the surface, they said (in offering their congratulations), “We *was* proud to hear you swear!” Another strange thing happened, for when he reached his house, looking no doubt pallid, he was met by his wife, who said, “Frank, you have fallen down the shaft.” How do these intuitions originate?

The early mining of the amateurs was deplorable. Surface lateral cuttings along the beds were put down as deep as the throwing up by shovels permitted. These cuttings were an abominable nuisance and had to be filled up when organised work was undertaken, as they would otherwise have been storage reservoirs from which the rain-water would have percolated into the lower workings. It was my business to climb about every hole that was made, in order to follow the progress. The Worcester Mine, so named from the town in the Cape Colony where its owners dwelt, was a typical example of the kind of mining done by the unsophisticated amateur. The formation dipped very steeply, almost vertically, into the earth. The bed was followed down by a narrow pit which pursued its sinuosities, and branches were driven off to test the continuity. The general aggregation of irregular holes and tunnels resembled a rabbit-warren. We descended by jamming our backs against one wall and our feet against the opposite wall. By sliding one’s back down, say, a foot and then similarly dropping one foot at a time (always maintaining a grip to prevent suddenly falling to the bottom), one got down, weary and

torn. Those early explorers revelled in making it very inconvenient, and even dangerous, to inspect their workings. A single candle held between one's fingers does not provide undue illumination in such conditions, and one naturally did not select Sunday clothes for the visit. The gold-bearing belt was resolutely followed as it twisted and turned and, if it became dislocated, a hole was made at random above and below to find the detached extension. Jennings, of course, soon introduced order into the mining chaos. Regulations were issued by the newly established Government Department of Mines, and energetic development went forward in earnest.

Titles were very insecure in those days, and "jumping," in point of fact, stealing, claims became a very prevalent disease. I will not weary the reader by describing the worry, the work, and the vexation of spirit that were entailed in maintaining one's rights against the depredations of the "jumpers," who thought nothing of substituting their pegs for those of the rightful owner during the night. Every day nearly something of this kind arose to keep us busy, and the rapidly increasing legal profession had its hands full.

Hermann Eckstein was quite the most prominent man on the Rand. He was universally respected and was generally popular. He and I rode together daily and talked over the prospects. The Chamber of Mines was formed in 1889, and he became first President, and took the chair for the last time on January 28th, 1892. Then he resigned and I was



*Photo by]*

[*Goch Studio.*

MR. HERMANN ECKSTEIN (JOHANNESBURG, 1891).



elected his successor. A sad duty devolved upon me on the occasion of my first annual address on January 26th, 1893, for my chief and friend, who had gone to England, died suddenly, his funeral being on the 19th of that month. Many touching tributes to his memory were delivered at that meeting.

Shortly after Eckstein's death I went to London, and was made head of the firm in Johannesburg, with a partnership. J. B. Taylor, a thoroughly good fellow and a fine sportsman, with whom and whose family my wife, children, and I have always kept up the most cordial relations, retired in that year, and a charming Frenchman, George Rouliot by name, joined us. He was clever, very witty, and a fascinating comrade. Alas ! like so many of my old friends, he is no more.

I occupied the presidential chair during four years, until my career was interrupted by the Raid, and then Rouliot played a conspicuous part. He became President of the Chamber of Mines in succession to Mr. James Hay (who took over the office in 1896 and acted until June 1897), and held the position with great ability up to and all through the Boer War. His common sense and geniality carried him through those troublous times. He ruled the industry with skill and was *persona grata* with everyone he encountered, including Lord Kitchener and his subordinates—no small feat in time of war. But I am skipping and must hark back.

The Rand was leaping into fame. Batteries were being erected all along the line, big dams

constructed for water conservation wherever the configuration of the ground served, order and system introduced above and below the surface. The output was growing. By 1893 it rose to 1,221,000 ounces and for 1895 it was 1,846,000 ounces. Confidence in the future was established. But we had fought against terrible drawbacks. I have given, in the case of the Bonanza, an instance of the want of appreciation of the potentialities on the part of clever men. No one had any idea of the future destiny of the Rand. It was a sealed book, but the covers were large and handsome and might have conveyed the impression that the contents were worth possessing.

It is unnecessary to make a detailed analysis of the rise of the field, but I will give one more illustration—the Rand Mines, Limited. My firm had pegged out and bought a great number of claims, and on February 22nd, 1893, a company was formed with a capital of £400,000 to acquire them. Changes in the capital were subsequently made, but that aspect need not detain us here. The claims included were situated below the actual outcrop. People were sceptical about what were then known as deep-level claims, i.e. those in which the beds were not exposed. Shafts through the overlying country rock had to be sunk to reach them, and it was deemed an open question then whether they would be found and, if so, whether gold would persist in them. I cannot do better than reproduce an extract from the speech I made at the first annual meeting in February 1894. Here it is:

“ I remember, as though it were but yesterday, in September 1889, driving into this town with my family, and feeling sick at heart as I looked out upon a mass of dusty galvanised-iron buildings, with a sprinkling of brick houses, mostly in a state of construction, all dotted at varying intervals over this now compact and handsome city. Any-one who has gone through the horrors that attended the growth of Kimberley can sympathise with the feeling that would assuredly oppress one at the prospect of going through another similar experience. There was no time, however, for sentiment. The May Deep Level Shaft was then down about 245 feet. I think the majority of people thought they would never strike the reef. I watched this with the keenest possible interest, and took several sections of the formation, both in the May and the Deep Level properties. Even after January 1890, when the reefs had actually been struck by the enterprising Deep Level Company, there were many who disputed that they had intersected the main reef series. There was also at this time grave doubts as to whether the pyritic ore could be treated at all ; the industry, as a whole, was grossly mismanaged ; the output was under 400,000 ounces for the year 1889 ; many companies were just touching the pyritic zone, and, curiously enough, at this particular level, the reefs were in almost every instance split, intermixed with sandstone, and showing in many cases undefined walls. I think this ominous appearance is easily explained to-day, being probably due to the oxidising agency having only penetrated to the solid reef through the less compressed and more disturbed portions at and close to the surface. Be this as it may, the mines certainly looked rather unpromising at that time. It did not take long, however, to demonstrate that the reefs became perfectly solid

again, the system of management was improved, and the industry gradually grew into what it is to-day.

“ In giving this historical retrospection, I think I should be committing a grave act both of omission and injustice if I failed to mention that the name most associated with the great and rapid progress made is that of my late partner, Mr. Hermann Eckstein. It was he who imported many highly qualified engineers, millmen, and mechanics—who, in fact, gave the first great impetus to development upon scientific lines, and risked large sums of money, and but for him the progress would have been far less rapid. At the time of which I am speaking, a claim once removed from the outcrop was deemed quite valueless, and to show incidentally the absolute want of confidence, I may mention that my own firm, to which I was then adviser in mining matters, declined to buy, for £10,000, a half share in about  $10\frac{3}{4}$  claims, now known as the Lionel Phillips Block, and that I joined in the purchase, with some friends, for my private account. This was in October 1889. Quite recently some very influential people purchased an interest in these claims at the rate of about £125,000 for the whole ; and I venture to say that this little property, excluding the main reef from consideration, most probably contains nearly a million pounds’ worth of gold. It must be remembered that it is located in the richest section of the Rand ; but, amongst your other immense possessions, you hold four-fifths of the shares in the Rand Deep Level Company, which lies immediately below the Crown, Lionel Phillips Block, and Robinson, and owns 191 claims. I could give you instances *ad nauseam* of the low esteem in which deep levels were held not so very long ago. For instance, when the offer of reconstruction was made to the Wem-

mer, Ferreira, Worcester Deep Level Company, the value of the thirty-one claims and machinery, according to the then selling price of the shares, was about £10,000, whilst to-day the property is certainly worth hundreds of thousands. The most striking instance of the want of appreciation is to be found in the fact that as late as 1890 between 200 and 300 claims were pegged out for this Company, and all these claims were located within 3,000 feet from the outcrop, and situated between the Langlaagte United to the west and May Consolidated to the east, on the Witwatersrand. The whole country below the 3,000 feet was practically open, and I could have pegged out any quantity of claims. As you will see by the plan, I did acquire some below that depth, which I thought it desirable to hold. In view of later developments I am sorry that I did not take more. That which is regarded as valueless to-day may, in a short time, be regarded as highly valuable, and just as, some years ago, one would have been looked upon as a person of wild ideas had one prophesied the working of such a property as the Geldenhuis Deep, in which a shaft has now actually pierced the reefs, so in the future will enterprising persons be found sinking for the reefs below your southern boundaries. Regarded by to-day's standard of value, the prices at which deep-level properties were acquired appear ridiculously small; but I ask you to bear in mind these words—by the standard of future values the prices of to-day will appear equally ridiculously low."

From 1898, when the Rand Mines, Limited, commenced to pay dividends, to the end of 1923, the Company has distributed £16,960,000, or, in other words, has returned its capital, approxi-

mately, thirty-two times. I must tell an amusing story that indicates the popular estimate of the time. I came to England for a holiday after the Rand Mines, Limited, was formed. Its capital was then £400,000 in shares of £1 each. The shares stood at £4 each. I recommended a wealthy merchant friend to buy himself a thousand. He replied, "What, mining shares?" I said, "Yes, and I will guarantee you against loss." No more was said. I went back to the Rand, and when the shares rose to £28 had a letter from him asking if I still recommended the purchase of them! I do not know to this day whether he acted on my original advice or not, but I suspect he did.

This reminds me of a funny story I was told recently. Two travellers in a first-class compartment were joined by a third at a station. Looking at him, one of them said to the other, "I am sure that is the Archbishop of York." His friend said, "You had better ask him." He did so and received the offensive reply, "What the hell has that to do with you?" On reaching their destination the two innocents said, "We do not know even now whether or not it was the Archbishop!"

The railway from the Cape Colony had reached Johannesburg in September and Pretoria in December 1892. Transport was therefore facilitated. The native labour supply was inadequate and irregular. Moreover, there was no recruiting organisation, and a host of men who could speak native languages scoured the country and engaged Kaffirs at the kraals and on the roads to pass on for a consideration to employers. Great abuses

crept in. Sometimes these men claimed a toll of a given amount per head or per month. Sometimes they hired the gang and supervised it under a form of contract by which they were paid for their own work with a subsidy for each native. Often they bolted with their own money and the wages of the natives too.

Terribly nefarious practices were rife. The drink curse was a scourge, and the Government did nothing to check it or to keep order over the week-ends, when indescribable orgies of drunkenness and tribal and faction fights occurred. The disorders were so appalling that on Sundays one hardly dared walk along the reef. The natives fell an easy prey to the vile stuff, and on Mondays a few had been killed and quite a considerable percentage were disabled in body and prostrated by the strain of the combats and the poison they had imbibed, so that work could proceed only at half speed.

Concession hunters were legion, and many infamous concessions were granted. One was for dynamite (given under the guise of keeping control of explosives and munitions in the hands of the State), which in 1894 was estimated to cost the industry £150,000 a year more than the imported article, and by 1899 had risen to £600,000. Another was for the establishment of the Hatherly Distillery, which turned out execrable spirits labelled as whisky, etc., of well-known brands. Laws, too, of a confiscatory type were put upon the statute book, in particular one concerning undermining rights which we fought for years and only finally

scotched after union. It is too complex a question to touch here.

Almost worse than the costly malefactions performed was the eternal and harassing danger of a bombshell, in the shape of a meretricious grant, being sprung upon the industry without warning. So far from receiving benevolent assistance from the Government, the industry which was giving strength and stability to the country had to keep a watchful and suspicious eye alert to avert mischief. A certain amount of money was spent to prevent the perpetration of predatory acts, but never a penny, as far as I am aware, to secure any rights or privileges for the mines. The Department of Mines was in those days developed on modest lines, the technical side consisting chiefly of a State Mining Engineer. To-day that Department has grown out of all recognition, and, without offence to my friend Sir Robert Kotze, its very able head, I think it right to say that the volume of regulations that has gradually been built up is too large and too ambitious in its aims. Every minor accident now is the subject of enquiry, and frequently afterwards of a new regulation, so that it is almost impossible for the mine managers to be versed in the ever-multiplying provisions for obedience to which they are held liable. No metalliferous mines in the world have ever been so over-regulated, especially as they are not subject, like coal mines, to explosions or to the unexpected ebullition of poisonous natural gases.

The terrible scourge of miners' phthisis has

been combated for many years now, and its occurrence has been immensely reduced. It has now been established that evil arises far more from impalpable particles of dust that float in the air than from coarser grains. The latest theory advanced by chemico-bacteriologists is that the lungs gradually convert this microscopic quartzose dust into a colloidal silicate that is poisonous.

It was thought in earlier days that the rock dust insidiously entered the lungs and, to the extent that the air cells were filled, put those organs out of action. The new theory is the more probable, as many occupations far dustier than underground mining on the Witwatersrand do not produce such dire consequences. To-day every conceivable device to prevent and trap dust is resorted to, and the Chamber of Mines has a special laboratory and staff solely devoted to testing mine air. The bedrock cause of the trouble seems to have been found, and the terrible disease of miners' phthisis has been not only reduced to relatively insignificant proportions but will probably disappear entirely. The suffering it has brought upon stalwart men, and the millions it has cost the mines, might have been lessened, if not entirely spared, by an earlier knowledge of its origin. Humanitarian as well as economic considerations have caused the Government and the mine directorates to sustain systematic research in that field. In the old days of which I am writing the disease was not dreamt of. Then pneumonia among the natives was a terrible enemy. To combat that the Chamber of Mines built and equipped

a bacteriological institution of just renown. It is now maintained jointly by that body and the Government under the direction of Dr. Watkins Pitchford, assisted by a highly qualified staff. Some years ago Sir Almroth Wright came to Johannesburg at the invitation of the mining industry and initiated the campaign. Since then, thanks to the researches of Sir Spencer Lister at the Institute, it has been found expedient to inject into the natives many millions more of the protective bacilli than Sir Almroth contemplated, and relative immunity from that deadly disease has been secured.

In the early nineties mining upon professional lines began. Everything pertaining to government was primitive. The Mining Commissioner, Mr. van der Merwe, was an honest, hard-working official. His duties were multifarious and left him no time to worry about the manner in which the mining work, or much else save gathering of revenue, was done. The State Mining Engineer, with a clerk or two, had more to do than any mortal could undertake. Now a perfect army of engineers, mining and mechanical, inspectors, clerks, and others demand the filling-up of innumerable forms, which in turn employ an army of draughtsmen and clerks on the mines, and in their zeal never give the hard-working manager a moment of peace. The régime is overdone and extravagant.

In those days the few civil officials that functioned were decent, well-conducted men. The same could not always be said of the police,

but I will not enlarge upon that subject as I have no desire to probe old sores. The trouble, as far as the mines were concerned, dwelt in more exalted quarters. The Minister of Mines, Mr. Christian Joubert, was a typical Boer of the old school. As President of the Chamber of Mines, I came much into contact with him and, though he had some glaring faults, he was always personally agreeable to me. It was, of course, advisable to cultivate friendly relations with him and endeavour to make him realise that, as the Minister, he became *ipso facto* father of the mines. We were not always successful, and indeed he had to bow to superior authority, the Executive Council, of which he was not a member. He was a magnificent specimen of a man, over 6 feet in height and broad in proportion, and, in spite of his years, stood erect. His features, cast in the Gallic mould of his forbears, were handsome, and his flowing white beard gave him a truly venerable appearance. Would that he had been as attractive within as without!

In 1894 the Mining Industry decided to entertain him at dinner. The banquet was quite a success, but I remember one rather amusing incident towards its close. Liqueurs were being served, and our unsophisticated guest took maraschino. He was handed the conventional small glass and tossed its contents off as one deals with a dose of unpalatable medicine. Turning to me, he said, "That tastes good." Suiting action to words, he called for a tumbler, half filled it with the potent concoction, and swallowed it at a gulp.

It just slipped down like an oyster. I was horrified, but, as a host, did not like to interfere, and indeed the whole proceeding was probably too sudden. It had no visible effect on him at the time, but I was told next day that he had what the Americans would call "some head." I forget what the speeches were like on that occasion, but they were no doubt of the platitudinous order common at such functions.

On another occasion my wife and I took him to a theatre. It was probably the first time in his life he had entered such a place. We arrived as the band was playing the overture, and he took his appointed seat in the front of the box with his huge smasher hat on. I felt embarrassed, as I knew directly the orchestra stopped the "gods" would fire off a volley of ribald witticisms, so, as tactfully as possible, I possessed myself of his headgear. All was well!

How retrospection revives memories! One could write a book full of the amusing trivialities of pioneering. It is perhaps lucky for the reader I never kept a diary. But it is perhaps unlucky too, for I might have separated the gay and the grave into two volumes. Then the reader's option would have been complete—to read one, both, or neither!

All sorts of visitors flocked to the gold fields—bankers, merchants, engineers, and travellers. Jennings got out from America several tried professional men as mine managers. And men of high repute like Hamilton Smith, Henry Cleveland Perkins, and other notable engineers paid us

a visit. Perkins became manager of the Rand Mines, Limited, the great undertaking previously referred to.

Hamilton Smith was a great character. He smoked incessantly, long black cigars which he threw away when a couple of inches were burnt, after chewing into rags the mouth end. His forte was hydraulics, but he had a fine clear head and a well-trained intelligence. He had a hand in building the first Tube—Central London. He was certainly eccentric. “Dick Smith,” his black-and-tan terrier, used to get the first and best cut of a joint, no matter what guests were at his table and quite regardless of his charming wife and her nieces. I stayed once at Chislehurst in his interesting home. He proposed a walk on Sunday. We started, as I thought, for a constitutional. On and on we went at a good pace to Oxted and back, sixteen miles! Conversation was very limited, the business of forging ahead being evidently his project. As we entered the gate on our return he said, “Well, I guess you walk pretty well.” Luckily I was in first-rate fettle, so I survived, but I learnt afterwards he had a hobby of enticing guests out for a walk and leaving them “done up” on the road somewhere. He had a French billiard table and knew every angle to perfection. Thus he rarely met an opponent worthy of his cue.

Rudolph Kahn, a French banker, with a fine palate and a real knowledge of the culinary art, came to look round. He had a beautiful *hôtel* in Paris, full of fine pictures and tapestry, of which he was a connoisseur. I visited him there later on.

He was a nervous man and was taking a coach journey. Having been warned that highwaymen haunted the roads (an entirely imaginary danger), he confided to a wag, who was seeing him off, that he had no valuables on him. The reply, "They take cheques," sent him off deep in misery.

Alfred Beit came out and was very pleased with our operations. He brought Lord Randolph Churchill with him, who spent several weeks in my house. The latter was as attractive a companion as it was ever my good fortune to meet, and we often sat up till the early hours of the morning talking. Poor man! I think his health was already failing, and this may have accentuated his intolerant attitude towards people at large, but particularly towards that section he deemed of no use to him.

Lord and Lady Montagu of Beaulieu, with their son Robert, spent some time with us. My wife and I saw a good deal of them when we came home, and he and I exchanged a voluminous correspondence afterwards. I look back with gratitude on his kindness to my unhappy wife in London after the Raid, when popular opinion was violently stirred in favour of the Jameson heroes and we in Johannesburg were anathematised. She felt alone and deserted, but old friends like Lord Montagu, the late Duke of Abercorn, and Miss Flora Shaw (now Lady Lugard) did all in their power to aid and comfort her.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE RAID

THE abortive revolution of 1895 in the Transvaal and the ill-fated Raid are a remarkable illustration of the adage *l'homme propose, et Dieu dispose*. The plans were not ill-laid, the case of the *uitlanders* was strong, and there was quite a reasonable prospect of success. Why was the fiasco so complete? I will try to tell the story from beginning to end simply and truly. An interval of twenty-nine years enables me to look back upon the lamentable happenings of that time in a judicial spirit. The scars of course remain, but the wounds are healed.

I need hardly recapitulate in detail the circumstances that rendered a trial of strength inevitable between the Kruger Government and the "new-comers." As early as 1891, as pointed out by Mr. F. E. Garrett (*An African Crisis*, p. 11), the Government had made itself so unpopular in Johannesburg that the President in passing through to meet the High Commissioner for a conference on various questions "was besieged in the Landdrost's house by a mob, which uproariously demanded a speech, groaned, broke in the railings, and actually hauled down the Transvaal flag and trampled it underfoot to the strains of 'Rule,

Britannia.'" The cup of disaffection was filled to the brim when an attempt was made to impose military service upon the unenfranchised *uitlanders*. Provisions were from time to time added to the electoral laws deferring the period of qualification for, and finally debarring them indefinitely from, the rights of citizenship. This was not by any means the only cause of grievance, but as the facts are on record, and my object is rather to tell the story of the Raid than to probe into the causes of it, I do not here propose to review all the grounds of complaint. Suffice it to say that the attitude of the Government was deeply resented.

As the representative of large financial interests I was averse, on the one hand, to being associated with political agitation, but deeply concerned, on the other, at events that were obviously leading up to civil commotion. I was in the habit of visiting Pretoria about once a fortnight to discuss various problems affecting the mining industry, and on very many occasions had long interviews with President Kruger. Over cups of coffee, with his long pipe always in action and a wastepaper basket as spittoon, he used to listen to my complaints and advice, interjecting a great many rather gruff "ja's," but never giving me any further indication of his thoughts. He was a peasant farmer of acute intelligence and dominating will, but unhappily of very little education. If we came as a deputation and protested against any proposal or action, he would sharply ask who had the guns! I became gradually upon reasonably friendly, personal terms, to the extent of



*Photo by]*

[*Leo Weintal, Pretoria, 1896.*

HIS HONOUR PRESIDENT S. J. P. KRUGER AND DR. HEYMANS.



being the only *uitlander* bidden from Johannesburg to the wedding of his granddaughter—an act of courtesy of which I felt unable to avail myself under the circumstances.

Frankly, he hated all the *uitlanders* and their restless energy. His ideal was a patriarchal State, with himself as Patriarch, where his burghers dwelt upon huge farms from which no neighbouring chimney was visible, and upon which practically no work was done. A little live stock, left to fend for itself and thrive or succumb as Providence might decree. Any mention of grievances, or possible future trouble, merely roused his anger. A friend of mine once proposed to buy a farm and have it run upon up-to-date lines. The President was furious. "What! Take the bread out of the mouths of my poor burghers!" Logical argument or persuasive eloquence was alike useless. What hope for the country could there be while such views prevailed?

He was a diligent reader of the Bible (the only book, I think, that he ever opened), and based his outlook upon its teachings—a fine groundwork from some aspects, but not applicable to the art of modern government or the general conduct of worldly affairs. His Hollander advisers, with no particular love of England and a taste for intrigue, aided and abetted him in his ill-chosen domestic and foreign policy. His aim was quite clear and was followed so consistently that it emulated the unalterable laws of the Medes and Persians. It was to hold down the *uitlander*, but to use him and his industry for strengthening the

State. "His people" were the *voortrekkers*, descendants of the Dutch and Huguenot settlers. No one else counted, not even other South Africans established in the country for generations. He particularly regarded the Dutch of the Transvaal and Orange Free State as "his people." Men of that race hailing from the Cape Colony were suspect. They had lived under the taint of the British flag!

As an illustration of the President's bent of mind I shall quote one story, out of a legion, about him. Two young men quarrelled over the division of a farm left to them by their father. By mutual consent they invited Kruger to adjudicate. Having heard their respective contentions, he addressed them in the following sense: "Your father was a very just man. He would naturally have desired Jantje, his first-born, to make the division, but he would have been equally anxious that Piet, his second son, should have his fair share. I therefore call upon Jantje to make the division and award to Piet the first choice of half." Here the biblical influence is evident. The President's strength of character and bravery, demonstrated in an infinite number of examples, have never been questioned.

A political body, called "The National Union," of which Mr. Charles Leonard (a well-known and highly respected lawyer) was Chairman, held meetings in Johannesburg and issued much literature upon the wrongs of the *uitlanders*. A sense of anger gradually pervaded the inhabitants and incidents arose, the most notable and dangerous

of which attended the visit of Sir Henry (afterwards Lord) Loch to Pretoria in 1894. The Government, thoroughly alarmed at the aggressive conduct of the crowd, summoned me to that place and, after questioning me as to the state of feeling on the Rand, bade me try to calm the people there. In point of fact, a great throng met Sir Henry Loch at the station. Upon his entering a carriage, accompanied by the President, the horses were removed and the crowd dragged the vehicle round to the hotel where the Governor was to put up. Two stalwarts climbed on to the box, waving a large Union Jack which occasionally fluttered into President Kruger's face, to his great annoyance. Sir Henry descended, leaving His Honour in the carriage. The crowd refused to continue the journey, and some Dutch citizens had to be gathered together to haul the carriage round to the Presidency. I do not defend the unmannerly conduct displayed, but it manifested the prevalent state of feeling. The President wrote to Sir Henry begging him not to visit Johannesburg, "lest a collision should arise." "It would be very agreeable to me, personally, and would be regarded by my Government as an act of international friendship, if you would give up your intended journey to Johannesburg." Sir Henry abandoned his visit, but received a deputation from Johannesburg in Pretoria.<sup>1</sup>

Thus far I had kept aloof from the agitation, and was frequently attacked in the local press, as head of the mining industry, for doing so. I then per-

<sup>1</sup> See F. E. Garrett's *The Story of an African Crisis*, pp. 12, 13.

ceived that an outburst would sooner or later take place. I had previously subscribed substantial funds to assist in electing more progressive men to the Raad, and some of them were indeed returned, but President Kruger captured their votes, too, by assuring them that a given measure under discussion involved "the independence of the State," no matter how remote its bearing might be in that relation. It was a hopeless situation. He exercised such hypnotic influence on the Raad that members who had stormed against given proposals often voted for them. One rather notable instance, not, however, due to Kruger's seductive persuasions, may be given. A very anti-English member had always opposed the dynamite concession. To the amazement of everyone he voted for it, saying that "the voice of the Lord came to me in the night and told me to vote for Lippert." At a later date, it is said, and I believe with justice, that the last-named gentleman cynically admitted the voice was his!

I had often written to my partners about the growing unrest, and after my arrest the Transvaal Government, having seized my private book with copies of correspondence, published garbled extracts, going to the length of detaching portions of sentences from their context. The false impressions thus created were exposed at the British Parliamentary Enquiry. I will give an example. Money spent legitimately for election purposes was represented as bribery, and the worst case was that in which I wrote (a much-quoted phrase), "People do not care a fig for the fran-

chise," as published without the remainder of the sentence, which ran on, "all they want is good honest administration"—quite another matter.

In 1895 one of my senior partners, Alfred Beit, came out to the Transvaal. On his way he had stayed with Cecil Rhodes at Groot Schuur. Beit, although a German by birth, was a keen imperialist. To my surprise, I found that he thoroughly shared my opinion that revolution was coming. He told me that Rhodes held the same view and thought we should take a hand to ensure success, if possible. Generally speaking, I was invited to co-operate, and after Beit's return to England I went down to the Cape to stay with Rhodes.

I do not think any useful purpose would be served by attempting to reproduce the discussions that took place. While there is nothing to withhold, I could not accurately describe all the pros and cons that were reviewed. During a stay of two or three days at Groot Schuur there is no doubt our survey covered a very wide field. Rhodes was a great talker and generally took a different view of anything to most mortals. His biographers have not done full justice to the originality of his mind, nor more than justice to his greatness and patriotism, proclaimed by his works. His character was highly complex; his estimate of his fellow-men was rather cynical and contemptuous; he was blunt to rudeness when he disagreed, having no respect for personages. He acted on the principle that the end justifies the means—a dangerous precept. He was, however, capable of great devotion and

generosity. As an instance, his affection for Neville Pickering, his friend and one-time secretary, who died, was intense and pathetic. He could also be brutally hard. In the earlier part of these memoirs I recorded a quarrel that caused a temporary breach in our relations. He hated being thwarted, and he looked upon my refusal to obey his behest as an affront. Had he been less big, it might have gone ill with me.

At the period of which I am now writing we were on very amicable and confidential terms. That may be deemed no matter for surprise, considering the nature of the affair we were preparing! At that time Cecil Rhodes, his brother Frank, John Hays Hammond, Jameson, and one or two more, with myself, were the only persons concerned in the movement. The arrangements came to were that about 5,000 rifles, with a million rounds of ammunition, should be smuggled into Johannesburg, and that Jameson was to be on the Transvaal border at Pitsani in Bechuanaland with 1,200 to 1,500 men, all mounted, fully trained and equipped with modern arms, field pieces, and machine guns. They were to cross the border and come to Johannesburg when called upon to do so, and each man was to carry a spare rifle.

Jameson himself came to the Rand twice. The first time was in September when provisional dates for the rising were mentioned—December 28th or January 4th. His second visit was in November, when he raised the momentous question of his invading the Transvaal without any sort of ground



MR. JOHN HAYS HAMMOND.



for so doing and, at his earnest request, "to prevent his entering as a brigand" and as some excuse, we gave him a letter of invitation *undated*, which described the expected situation upon hostilities being entered upon by us. The date was to be filled in when we gave the signal. The misuse of that letter, when the Raiders determined to force the issue, will always add a stigma to what was otherwise only an act of stupendous folly. Meanwhile preparations went forward. Rifles were sent to Kimberley, where some enthusiastic sympathisers packed them in oil-drums very skilfully.

Our plan included the taking of the arsenal in Pretoria. That undertaking by revolutionaries sounds formidable, but would have been indeed a very simple and hardly a hazardous task. The so-called arsenal comprised a number of scattered gimerack buildings enclosed by a weak brick wall of which one side was being rebuilt. The guard consisted of between ninety and one hundred men of the Staats Artillerie, and, early hours being the rule, all excepting eight or ten on night duty were asleep by nine o'clock. Any night, by surprise attack, a hundred men could have rushed that place, possibly without firing a shot. According to our information, the arsenal contained about 10,000 Martini rifles, under a dozen guns, mostly Maxims, and some ten million rounds of ammunition. Our intention was to transport as much war material as we could to Johannesburg and destroy the rest. For this purpose we had purchased and stationed at Pretoria three large buck-wagons and three picked teams of mules. At

the Half-way House, about eighteen miles on the road of thirty-four miles in all, we had spare teams of mules. We could thus have easily carried 40,000 lb. weight to its destination during the night. Thus, had events marched "according to plan," we should have possessed at the outbreak about 8,000 or 9,000 rifles, a few Maxims, and a moderate supply of ammunition, with Jameson's auxiliaries to give us support. What a difference between the design and the realisation ! Of that, however, anon.

It was always agreed that the revolt should take place under the Transvaal flag. Although secrecy was essential, we did not lack active and capable helpers. Without invidious selection of names, I may especially mention Farrar (later Sir George), Fitzpatrick (afterwards Sir Percy), Sam Jameson (brother of the Doctor), and a good many other trustworthy supporters, including no mean proportion of South Africans. The sympathy of the whole country was with us and the project did not appear very difficult of attainment.

In order to emphasise the relations between ourselves and Jameson, I repeat that he was always intended to play a subordinate part. In this connection I have never been able to recollect what particular conversation between Jameson and myself in November 1895 caused him, on his return to Cape Town on the 24th or 25th of that month, to make a report to Rhodes which prompted the following telegram (published in an appendix to the Report of the Select Committee) from Rhodes to Harris :

"Dr. Jameson back from Johannesburg everything right my judgment it is certainty we think A. Beit must come with you on November 29th on score of health you will be just in time. A. Beit to stay with me here and go up with us and Governor. A. Beit must not consult Phillips who is all right but anxious to do everything himself and he does not wish to play second fiddle. Inform A. Beit from me he must come. C. J. RHODES."

The report by Jameson was made after his final visit to the Rand. It is quite possible, knowing his impulsive, reckless nature and the very great importance from the standpoint of South African sentiment for Johannesburg to take the initiative, that I may have uttered a caution. I do not recollect it, and have no means to-day of proving or disproving it, but I can positively assert that the question of my part in the upheaval was, at that time, quite undefined, and I certainly had no allotted position of first or second fiddle in the orchestra. I was taking a prominent part in the conspiracy, but it was not likely, in view of my industrial position and responsibilities, that I contemplated being in the forefront. Circumstances, as will be seen, forced me later on to take the lead, and, short of deliberately running away and forfeiting my good name for ever, no other course was open to me. Had I known of the existence of that cable when the British Parliamentary Enquiry was in progress, I might have had the matter cleared up there; but we must bear in mind that Jameson and his party had not yet been tried, and all of us were opposed to saying anything that might prejudice their position.

The letter of invitation was to justify him with the British South Africa Company, and was to be dated at our and not at his instance. He was to help us, not we him. The contingency of his being in any military difficulty was never contemplated, for the reason that we were to strike the first blow, and, had that been successful, his march to Johannesburg with a well-appointed force 1,200 strong could not have been in doubt. The 1,200, however, we were told later, would not exceed 1,000. That was already regrettable. The long wait at Pitsani and the ignorance of the objective played havoc with the size and *moral* of the little army. Desertions were increasing and may have stimulated his anxiety to start. Moreover, he was surrounded by a body of gallant young officers whose martial ardour vastly exceeded their experience and common sense. They, like greyhounds in the leash, were eager to be set free. All these factors had their influence upon "the Doctor," whose brave and adventurous temperament chafed at the delay, even of one week, imperative under the circumstances. Dwindling effectives, and the importunities of comrades, coupled with an exaggerated belief in the powers of his miniature array of combatants, led him to take the plunge against all instructions by telegrams from Rhodes and ourselves, and messages carried by two of his own officers, Captain Holden and Major Heany.

The telegram announcing his invasion put his force at 700. It started on the evening of December 29th with actually less than 500 combatants. The mere fact of his taking the initiative rendered

disaster inevitable in any case. The warnings he had received left no room for doubt upon that head. As Rhodes ruefully exclaimed after the surrender, "Jameson took the bit between his teeth and bolted." His nearest friend had "upset his apple-cart." It was not the only apple-cart upset! The last thing we dreamt of in Johannesburg was that he would violate orders and start an invasion. We credited him with knowing, as we did, that such an act must put us all in the wrong and cause, as it did, South African opinion to swing as assuredly against us as it had previously been in our favour. To rise under the flag of the country we lived in, for the redress of our wrongs and the establishment of a sound government, would, I agree, have been a very distasteful proceeding to the party in power, but, outside the backveld of the Transvaal, would have been applauded and approved very generally throughout the rest of South Africa.

Many people amongst our partisans and sympathisers expressed doubts as to the wisdom of Jameson's participation in any form. I think myself that, had he started his invasion after, or even simultaneously with, our outbreak, and success had crowned our initial proceedings, the co-operation of "the foreign force" would have been condoned. But his initiative immediately gave birth to the cry that we were trying to steal the country. Anyone interested enough in the politics of the time can trace in many works the ungracious and unneighbourly acts of the Kruger régime upon fiscal and railway matters

(the closing of the drifts, and so on) that had alienated the friendly feeling not only of the British Colonies but of the Free State too.

As, however, I do not intend here to survey the field of general politics, I will now turn to a subject that caused much misconception and not a little cruel misjudgment of the leading men in Johannesburg, namely, the cause of the decision to postpone the revolt for a week. Mr. (now Sir Abe) Bailey and Mr. (afterwards Colonel Sir Aubrey) Woolls-Sampson, now deceased, on the way out from England were told in Cape Town that Jameson intended to march under and raise the British flag on arrival. The news came as a bombshell, and was considered by a small meeting of the confederates, at which Colonel Rhodes, Sam Jameson, Bailey, Sampson, and a few others, including myself, were present. Rhodes had agreed to our rising under the Republican flag. We not only appreciated the error from a tactical standpoint, but were in a most embarrassing situation, as we had solemnly pledged ourselves to the Afrikanders who were in with us, and to men who had been through the 1881 war and were ruined after Gladstone's surrender, that we would not tamper with the flag. That was not our business. We intended to secure justice for ourselves and our *uitlander* friends if we could, but realised the folly of trying to supplant the Vierkleur.

We decided that it was imperative to put this matter right, and despatched Charles Leonard and F. H. Hamilton to Cape Town to make that blunder impossible. Moreover, in discussing the situation

we realised that January 4th was a better date than that chosen, because the thousands of visitors to Johannesburg at Christmas-time would have departed and, in the event of a siege, the absence of those mouths would be advantageous. It is true that the latter consideration ought to have occurred to us at an earlier date—I admit that; but when men are conspiring to overturn a government they have to take so many things into account that even an important item often escapes notice. The flag incident, however, caused the delay. Our anxiety as to provisions was secondary. As a matter of fact, the town was well provisioned. Through the buying organisations of the mines, we had purchased and paid for supplies for two months.

Perhaps in connection with the subject of flag I should recount something that I have never put on paper before, which bears upon my view of that question at the time. In December 1895 Mr. (afterwards Viscount) Bryce was visiting Johannesburg with his wife. They stayed with me at Hohenheim. Knowing that trouble was coming, I had sent my wife and children to England. That removed one of my anxieties. As my house was the scene of many secret meetings, and the comings and goings were very numerous, I feared that a man of Bryce's acute intellect would become suspicious and, quite inadvertently, say or telegraph something that might be dangerous. As he was my guest, I felt no risk in giving him my full confidence. Under pledge of secrecy I told him the whole story. I did not make a note of the conversation,

so am relying on my memory, which is, however, I am sure, accurate. He asked, "What flag?" I replied, "Transvaal flag." He then said, to my surprise, "Why not the British flag?" I answered, "Surely no one knows better than yourself the vast difference between upsetting a government and changing its flag." He at once assented, and it is more than probable merely launched his enquiry to elicit my reply.

But I went on to explain that I had no illusions about the job in hand. I did not believe, even with preliminary success and with the expected armaments, backed by Jameson's contingent, that we could fight the Transvaal, with perhaps many volunteers from the back-veld of the Free State and even the Cape too. All we could reasonably count upon doing would be to hold Johannesburg and defeat an assault upon it. Then the Boers would have invested the city and cut off supplies. We could have survived by strict rationing for from two to three months. During that time terms might have been made. On the other hand, the Boers might have determined to starve us into submission. I expressed the opinion that, with our case, no British Government could sit supinely by and see us reduced by starvation. He then said, "I am sure if our party were in power we should come to your aid, and I have no reason to think the present Government will not."

In making this statement Mr. Bryce had no doubt in mind the action of Sir Henry Loch in 1894, after the seething excitement during

his visit to Pretoria and his subsequent collection of troops on the Bechuanaland border for eventualities. That action was defended in the House of Lords and approved by Mr. Chamberlain himself. How could a British Government, as suzerain power, permit its own subjects to be not only trampled upon but possibly destroyed by an armed vassal, even if they rose in open rebellion against his oppression ?

My object in reproducing this incident is to contrast the virile statesmanship of the nineteenth century with the flabbier type that has reigned since the Great War. Lord Bryce was certainly not a Jingo, but he had a just appreciation of national greatness and honour, and, although I know he was by no means convinced that the conditions in 1899 constituted a *casus belli* (and I had some correspondence with him at the time), he fully appreciated the intolerable situation created by Kruger's ill-treatment of the *uitlanders* in the years preceding the Raid.

It is no use speculating now upon what might have been, but the chances are that fair terms would have resulted, or the British flag would again have speedily flown over the Transvaal.

And what of armament ? At the date fixed for the rising we were in possession of only 1,200 to 1,500 rifles. They were cleverly packed in oil-drums and were distributed, in their bulky receptacles, at various mines underground. At the time Jameson started upon his ill-fated enterprise not a single rifle had been unpacked. We had taken such ample measures to warn him against

moving, and were advised from Cape Town to "continue preparations but carefully, and without any sort of hurry," that we made no preparation for the assault upon the arsenal at Pretoria. The success of such an undertaking depended upon surprise. On the day of the attempt we should have transferred the equipment to the capital and assembled a hundred picked men at a convenient spot for the task. We had no lack of reliable material for that little business. But our intentions were frustrated by Jameson's premature action. As already stated, he left Pitsani on Sunday evening, December 29th, and had previously detailed two of his men to cut telegraph wires. One failed. The result was that the Zeerust—Rustenburg—Pretoria line was intact, and the Boer Government had news of his invasion eight hours before ourselves! Only at about midday on Monday we heard "rumours," speedily corroborated by a telegram to Bailey, reading as follows :

"The Veterinary Surgeon has left for Johannesburg with some good horseflesh and backs himself for seven hundred."

The meaning was clear, though incorrect as to numbers. Imagine our situation! Not a gun unpacked, not an inkling of why our instructions were disobeyed. A dozen of us met and decided to form the Reform Committee. Many well-known men joined. The population was with us heart and soul. The drums were hauled to the surface and the rifles distributed. But where was the rest of our arms? Either at Kimberley or some-

where between that place and Johannesburg ! Someone was sent down the line to track them, and they finally arrived on Wednesday afternoon ! Jameson surrendered on Thursday morning !

By superhuman efforts we organised or extemporised a scratch force. So earnest and vigorous were our recruits that we were able to take over the town and police it, the Government police having been withdrawn. All the canteens were shut, and never before had Johannesburg known such order and safety. We also occupied a number of the best defensive points commanding the city. By Wednesday night we had our 2,500 rifles distributed and had strengthened our detachments on various ridges skirting the town. We even had a detachment of ninety mounted men, besides twenty or thirty on special duty. The leading men amongst us knew that the game was up and the position hopeless. We were responsible for a town of about 100,000 souls ! The project of taking the arsenal in Pretoria was out of the question. By the Monday night Pretoria was already filling with armed burghers, everyone was on the alert, and the whole plan "had gone off like a damp squib." I am confident no prominent man in the conspiracy then thought he would get out of the mess alive. So, short of decamping, we could only "see it through" and do our best in appalling circumstances.

The High Commissioner had disowned Jameson and ordered him to withdraw. We did not know why he had started nor whether he would come on or go back. The Government, by that time alive to the seriousness of the situation and, as the sub-

sequent events proved, thoroughly alarmed, sent over two emissaries, Messrs. Marais and Malan (men of progressive views), on Monday night to offer us the olive branch and to invite a deputation to meet a Commission with a view to coming to terms if possible. Our discussion with these gentlemen led us to believe that the overture was sincere. We have been blamed for responding. As I write, the situation revives in my recollection, and, regarding it, as I do now, in a distant perspective, I cannot see how we could rationally have acted otherwise.

On Tuesday morning, December 31st, four of us went over and met a Commission consisting of Chief Justice Kotze, Judge Ameshoff, and Mr. Kock, a member of the Executive Council. We had a long interview and there was no lack of plain speech on our part. I was spokesman, and made no disguise of our connection with Jameson, although he had started against our express instructions. The Commission informed us that they were not empowered to make a settlement, but were to report to the Executive Council. The meeting was adjourned until the afternoon, when the Chief Justice handed us the following document :

“ Sir Hercules Robinson has offered his services with a view to a peaceful settlement. The Government of the South African Republic has accepted his offer. Pending his arrival, no steps will be taken against Johannesburg, providing Johannesburg takes no hostile action against the Government. In terms of the proclamation recently

issued by the President, the grievances will be earnestly considered."

This was the so-called armistice. The deputation neither accepted nor rejected it, but I certainly intended to use my influence to keep within its provisions as the only course open to us. We left the Commission on amicable, if rather formal, terms, and, acting upon an authority telegraphed to us from Johannesburg, offered the lives of the whole Reform Committee as hostages for the peaceful departure of Jameson if he were allowed to enter unmolested.

We have been blamed for entering into any negotiations with the Government against which we were in rebellion, but they had made the overtures, they had invited the High Commissioner to intervene, and we were in a desperate plight. Our seizure of the arsenal had been frustrated, the few arms we had received were being hauled out of the mines, conveyed to town, and distributed. We might, of course, have "let the storm burst" had we been prepared to disregard all consequences to the unfortunate inhabitants of Johannesburg. It was too late to make even a respectable diversion, for during Monday and Tuesday Boers were pouring into Pretoria and the contents of the intact Arsenal were being dealt out. Defiance of the Government at that stage, by opening the campaign, would have been momentarily spectacular and would have supplied exciting copy to many writers who reviled us roundly in their ignorance, but how speedily its

hollowness would have been exposed ! Moreover, the movement was organised to serve, not to destroy, the *uitlanders*. For us to have fired the first shot, after the project of taking the arsenal had been baffled by the impetuous conduct of our ally, and when our preparations had been purposely deferred for a week, could merely have sacrificed our followers, to whom we had been able to supply only a meagre equipment of arms and ammunition, and would have entailed a loss of life and suffering upon our townspeople the extent of which could not be measured nor its egregious folly justified.

We had no doubt that Jameson's well-supplied and trained force of 700 men (the numbers stated) would reach Johannesburg or would obey the order of the High Commissioner and withdraw. He undertook his ill-starred initiative either under the belief that I did not wish to "play second fiddle" or that all of us were cowards and poltroons held back by fear. If he held the latter opinion, surely his action was the more ill-judged, for men who are too supine to take action will only be reduced to panic, and not to deeds of heroism, by such procedure. Jameson, naturally, did not know his wire cutters would fail, but, if the telegraph had been silent, neither we nor the Boers would have heard of his movement for a couple of days. We might then have conjectured what had happened, and have still been able to take the arsenal, but I doubt it. He had been emphatically warned to hold his hand for a week and advised of the consequences of a premature start.

I shall never forget the horribly conflicting considerations that filled my brain at the time, nor the terrible strain of being the leader. Truly, we had a committee that passed resolutions, but of course individuals poured advice into my ears, critical and flattering, supporting and opposing, amicable and hostile. I had to direct, and, on the whole, received loyal assistance and obedience. Colonel Rhodes, George Farrar, John Hays Hammond, and I were, with Fitzpatrick, the inner council.

We may have been misguided. I still do not think we were, but we were not afraid. Why should we have been ? We could not anyhow hope to escape punishment and probable death. To us there was a real temptation to do the popular thing. Just a word of command and the rifles would have spoken. That would have happened had we not kept our heads and put a restraint upon our own inclinations and those of many of our followers. We had pledged our lives when we joined the conspiracy, we had pledged them again with the rest of the Reform Committee in our offer to become hostages, and we did not expect to survive. But we did refuse to impose the great sacrifice upon hundreds, perhaps thousands, of our fellow-citizens in a cause already lost, for that could only have been prompted in us by the vanity of display, and before passing into historical oblivion our names would have been held in contempt and execration. We had doubts, I expect, as to securing reforms as complete and far-reaching as we had risen to obtain, but we had reason to expect that the High Commissioner would not come to Pretoria and depart

not only empty-handed, as he did, but without so much as mentioning the grievances. But I am anticipating.

In spite of fully recognising the weakness of our position, we pushed on with our military preparations, and, as previously mentioned, by Wednesday night had received all our rifles and allotted them. The Boers, happily for us, as will appear later, had an altogether exaggerated estimate of our strength. But the absence of fighting left rumour free play, and the "lying jade," as usual, applied a stupendous magnifying-glass to her reports. Our object was to defer an attack on the town, for the test of battle at that stage would probably have been disastrous. We had received in all about forty cartridges per rifle, but we were aware that the hasty distribution of them had been very sketchy and at no point could any very effective or prolonged defence have been sustained. What were we to do ? Make the inglorious fiasco more tragic by committing our town to hostilities, knowing that the hope of success had gone ? Some people think that such a course would have been heroic. I think it would have been insane. As I look back upon that anxious time, I know that we acted sincerely and properly. There were plenty of brave men ready to embark on any wild enterprise.

On Wednesday afternoon a messenger got through from Jameson saying that he was all right, but would like a few men to meet him, not to extricate him from difficulties, but to give him countenance ! The British Agent called upon us,

as loyal subjects of the Crown, to take no action, and informed us that Jameson was to be stopped. We had done all we could to protect our ally, and sent him cordial messages in the belief that he had been misled into starting and would duly arrive. But we knew that the use of force, whether he arrived or not, could not then serve, and the sole hope lay in the mediation of the High Commissioner. We were not aware that meanwhile Jameson had lost his way and was being shepherded by a "guide," light-heartedly engaged on the road, into the trap at Doornkop, where he had to surrender the following morning.

I will not attempt to describe the agonies of mind that were mine after the news of Jameson's invasion arrived. I had been elected leader by the Committee. I knew that nothing short of a miracle could save the situation. We thought that some false rumour of a massacre in Johannesburg had impelled "the Doctor" to disobey. He was the friend of many years' standing. I had the greatest admiration for his intellect and courage. I could not imagine he had flouted our grave warnings or misinterpreted our reasons for delay. The fact is, he started in a gambling spirit and chanced its being all right. He commanded an adventurous band, small in numbers but overfull of confidence in its military strength and competency. His responsibility ended there. I, and those associated with me, had on our hands a big town and could not take a foolhardy risk. By the light of later events, the original plan, with all the arms and help we reckoned upon, looks hazard-

ous enough. But there was reason in it, and no one can tell now how the revolt would have shaped had we been in a position to take the initiative. A heavy blow at the outset by us might have altered the complexion of the outlook and the final result. But it is useless to build a superstructure upon a foundation of might-have-beens. It might have been even more disastrous—who can say? The Raid, in spite of its inglorious ending, undoubtedly spread a knowledge of Transvaal doings which no amount of propaganda could have accomplished.

By Wednesday night, having had no sleep on the two previous nights, I was, as were many others, absolutely exhausted. I remember falling or lying down upon the floor to snatch a little rest and a comrade tucking a coat under my head. At about four o'clock on Thursday morning Colonel Rhodes woke me up to say that he had sent Bettington and his ninety men out on horseback to meet Jameson. I asked him why he had done it. He replied that it was in compliance with his (Jameson's) request not to appear as a brigand. I discussed the whole situation with him and asked if he estimated the little body to be of any service in case the Doctor had got into a tight place. He said that, from a military standpoint, it was of no value, as, if Jameson with 700 men could not fight his way in, Bettington's untrained contingent, after riding twenty-eight miles, would not be of any service. I decided to recall it. We had no information that Jameson needed help. We had no effective help to offer him, and, by opening hostilities, we should have



*Photo by*

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**ELLIOTT & FRY**  
COLONEL FRANK RHODES, C.B., D.S.O.

*[Elliott & Fry.*



given the Boers a justification for an assault on Johannesburg. I take the full responsibility for the decision and would act in the same way again under similar circumstances.

By Thursday afternoon we heard of Jameson's defeat and surrender. The town was in an uproar. A huge mob gathered round the offices of the Reform Committee and threatened an attack upon us. That was not surprising, as they were ignorant of the facts. The roar of an angry mob, of which I have unfortunately had a good deal of experience in my time, is a blood-curdling phenomenon, but all of us in executive authority were by that time so worn out and sick at heart that nothing could be perturbing. In all human beings there is a point of nervous strain at which, mercifully, the ability to feel becomes numbed. That was our state. That the crowd did not make an assault upon our office that night, and annihilate us, is due probably to their belief, like that of the Government at Pretoria, in our strength.

It must be noted that our interview with the Government Commission began on Tuesday morning and ended on Tuesday afternoon. I remember that we only got back to the Reform Committee rooms after dark. The Raiders were captured on Thursday morning early. President Kruger did not revoke his invitation to the High Commissioner (as he could have done by telegram), who only left Cape Town that night. Between whom, then, did he journey up to the Transvaal to make "a peaceful settlement" and in whose interest were grievances to be earnestly considered? When

we heard that Sir Hercules Robinson was actually coming to Pretoria upon the invitation of the Transvaal Government and after they had vanquished and captured the Raiders, we naturally thought that his visit portended the promised consideration of grievances. Sir Jacobus de Wet, the British Agent, was in close touch with us, and in calling upon us to disarm—under threat that we should “otherwise forfeit the entire sympathy of the British Government”—we naturally expected that Queen Victoria’s representative would uphold us as far as possible. In that expectation we were woefully mistaken.

Sir Hercules Robinson (afterwards Lord Rosmead) was a very old man. When he reached Pretoria he was quite unfit to deal with a situation so excited and delicate. According to the information we obtained, he broke down. Kruger by that time knew something of the contents of the despatch-box captured at Doornkop that Major (now General) the Hon. Robert White took into the field with him. Here was a harvest for the Boers. The despatch-box contained copies of telegrams and a code handy for deciphering them, including the names of all sorts of people in and out of South Africa who might in some direct or indirect way be implicated. All the leading actors naturally graced its columns. Splendid booty, of course, for the enemy in the *event of failure*, but the Raiders never imagined failure possible. Still, “die Trommel van Bobby White” not only supplied indisputable material for our conviction, but, through the medium of the wide choice of names, with code affixes,

opened a fine field for ingenious conjectures. Thus Chamberlain, Colonial Office officials, and others could be colourably, if improperly, accredited with a share, of which they were innocent, in the *débâcle*.

Beyond arranging for the conveyance of the Raiders to London for trial and, on pain otherwise of "forfeiting all sympathy of H.M.'s Government," disarming Johannesburg, Sir Hercules succumbed to President Kruger's thunder and the grievances went by the board. A younger and more forceful representative of the Crown might have assumed a firmer attitude regarding the "peaceful settlement" he had travelled over a thousand miles to arrange. We tried in vain to get into communication with him, but, acting no doubt under the persuasive eloquence or the lurid threats of the President, he left the Transvaal and ourselves to whatever fate might have in store. Within about a week Mr. Chamberlain in despatches drew the attention of Sir Hercules Robinson to the subject of the unredressed grievances.<sup>1</sup>

The surrender took place, and, when we had given up about 2,300 rifles, the Boer officials asked what had become of the remaining 17,500 rifles. I was dumbfounded. If we had only had them! I replied, "If we had possessed 20,000 rifles, do you think we should have been such fools as to give you 2,300 of them?" Although I think my answer fairly satisfied them, a tremendous search for arms followed in the town.

<sup>1</sup> In *The Transvaal From Within*, pp. 218-20, the despatches are published.

On January 9th I heard that it was intended that night to arrest the Reformers. A good many were actually seized then. I determined to have one more night of peace and rest, which I enjoyed at the unsuspected house of a friend.

On the following morning I wrote to the Chief of Police, asking instructions as to where I should give myself up. I duly went to the appointed place and found many of my friends who had not been rounded up on the previous night. We were treated quite decently in Johannesburg and sent over by train to Pretoria, where we were greeted at the station by a howling mob of Boers, who followed us upon our march up to the jail, hurling invectives of the foulest kind at us and even assaulting some of us. Being the leader of the party, I walked at the head of the procession, next to the leading files of police, thus accidentally escaping the worst attentions of the mob. An old man, Captain Mein, the distinguished Manager of the Robinson Gold Mining Company, was tripped up and hurt in the rear ranks of the party. It was not a pleasant afternoon's promenade, and the closing upon us of the prison gates was quite a relief.

Inside the yard we found ourselves mixed up with criminals of various descriptions. A Scotsman named Robertson, convicted of housebreaking, proved himself a most helpful and informative denizen. We were soon sorted out, and the majority of our men were put together in a galvanised-iron building, none too large for their accommodation. George Farrar, Colonel Rhodes, John Hays Hammond, and I were put into the condemned cell

together, a room twelve feet square. Jameson and his party were in another part of the same prison. On the first night one or two of his party were exercising in a yard next to the narrow strip of ground outside our cell to which we were allowed to go for some air. In passing I asked a prominent member of that party (not perhaps in parliamentary language) why they came. He asked, in reply (in terms no more elegant), why we had not met them. Our interchange of pleasantries was nipped in the bud by a warder levelling his rifle uncomfortably close to my head. I never saw any of them again before they were sent to England.

Then came a period of suspense and the preliminary trial. Nothing much was submitted then by the Government—just enough to commit us for trial, which took place about three months after our arrest.

We were busy preparing our defence when a bombshell fell upon us. The encyclopædic contents of the despatch-case, with which we were unacquainted then, were divulged and knocked the bottom out of any plea, save that of guilty, which we might make. Cipher telegrams were decoded and the whole conspiracy exposed—a gold mine of State evidence so damning and complete that our proposed line of defence (that had some points of substance in it) fell like a sand castle before the rising tide. Our Counsel, Sir James Rose-Innes (now Chief Justice of the Union) and Mr. (now Sir John) Wessels (to-day a Judge of the Supreme Court) regarded our case as hopeless. They got into touch with the legal luminaries of the

Republic, who informed them that the rank and file of our party would be let off lightly if we four leaders would plead guilty to high treason. We determined to follow that course, and were condemned to death. The other Reformers were each fined £2,000 and given a term of imprisonment. They were soon released, however, but we were detained in jail three months after the death sentence was commuted, but were then granted our liberty upon the payment of a fine of £25,000 each.

Before closing the historical part of this narrative, I feel impelled to answer, as best I may, a question often put to me. Was Mr. Chamberlain privy to the Raid ? I reply, *No*. I was in South Africa, and therefore do not know at first hand all that transpired in London, but I saw most of the telegraphic correspondence. I do know, however, that our emissary who acted in London was neither very reliable nor prudent. He is dead now, and I have no wish to blacken his memory. But apart from the question of his credibility, there is a very important point to bear in mind. Language at best is not a perfect method of conveying thought. We think a thing, we express it in our words—perhaps inaccurately. Our auditor puts his interpretation on our words—perhaps faultily again. Discrepancies arise when we use plain language in ordinary intercourse. What is likely to happen when we purposely use ambiguous and suggestive language—the equivalent of a nod and wink unaccompanied by any words—in important matters ? What a field for faulty interpretation and deductions ! Harris con-

veyed hints to Fairfield, and Fairfield reported to his Chief. The Colonial Secretary knew that troubles were brewing and naturally watched events with anxiety and interest. He would have been culpable if he had not done so, and in certain eventualities he may have contemplated the use of Jameson's forces or been ready to condone their unauthorised intervention ; but I cannot regard it as likely that he knew of or would have countenanced their becoming prime movers. I saw him many times after I returned to England, and the impressions here stated became convictions.

Before closing this chapter I will add a few remarks of a subsidiary character.

Shortly after our incarceration, the Jameson officers left, and we four leaders were transferred from the condemned cell into their quarters. Most of the lesser lights of our party were subsequently admitted to bail. We were then permitted to hire a cottage with a fairly large garden as our prison, and fifty of the Staats Artillerie were stationed there to guard us. Feeling ran high among the Boers and a plot was hatched to lynch us before the trial. In an earlier chapter I referred to the rebellion in 1815 during Lord Charles Somerset's term of office, after which five Boers were hanged on a beam at Slachter's Nek. The beam used on that occasion was built into a house at Cookhouse Drift. The enterprising lynchers secured this beam, which was sent to Pretoria. Providentially for us, Sir Jacobus de Wet, the British Agent at Pretoria, was a native of Somerset East, close to Cookhouse Drift, and someone informed him of

the acquisition and transmission of the beam and the purpose on foot. He at once advised the Colonial Secretary, who acted with his usual courage and decision in cautioning President Kruger that he would be held personally responsible for our safety pending the judgment of the Court. The President admitted that enquiry proved the beam had actually arrived at the capital, but was destined for the museum! The danger was so serious, however, that my wife, who had returned from England with the children soon after my arrest, pluckily smuggled into our prison four revolvers and a bottle of chloroform, by means of which it was hoped we might, in a grave emergency, escape. We were by then on friendly terms with our guards, and, being permitted to provide our own food, were able to entertain them with occasional drinks. We should have drugged the men on guard and escaped on their horses, but a ride of a hundred miles to the border would have been a precarious adventure.

Rather a comical incident occurred while we were in the private prison. A friend of ours visited the State Attorney and pointed out that, as all the other Reformers were out on bail, he might at least allow us to leave on bail for a weekend. He consented, upon the understanding that the matter was to be kept private and upon our pledging ourselves not to take part in politics. In due course we were escorted by our fifty mounted guards to Pretoria Station. There we bade them a friendly *au revoir*. We returned, according to agreement, on the Monday, and, lo and behold! the

gallant fifty drawn up to escort us back again ! A kind of royal escort and a sure manner of keeping our week-end visit private !

Before the final trial a disaster overtook Johannesburg which diverted public attention from the Raid. Owing to the carelessness of some employees of the Netherlands Railway Company, fifty tons of dynamite were left standing in open trucks in a siding at Braamfontein—the goods station at Johannesburg. Exposed for four days to the heat of the summer sun, the nitro-glycerine no doubt began to exude from the porous earth used as an absorbent, and on February 19th, either spontaneously or owing to some slight shock, exploded. The trucks were blown into fragments, and an immense hole in the ground, which I saw later on, gave some idea of the force expended. Eighty persons were killed, five hundred were injured, and fifteen hundred rendered homeless, mostly poor burghers who lived in that unfashionable locality. Property to the value of hundreds of thousands sterling was destroyed.

A relief fund was raised to which the Government contributed £25,000 and the Railway Company £10,000. It grew to £150,000, thanks chiefly to the liberality of Johannesburg, which was stirred to its depth by the catastrophe. President Kruger visited the sufferers in the Hospital and the Wanderers' Hall and, proceeding to the scene of the cataclysm, wept over the havoc wrought. He declared that Johannesburg had come to the rescue nobly, and it was suggested in some quarters that his subse-

quent clemency to the Reform prisoners was influenced by that exhibition of humane feeling. Be that as it may, I think the relations between the *uitlanders* and the enfranchised population were softened owing to the assistance, in deed as well as in the munificence, of the Rand community. Whatever momentary improvement in sentiment between the white races may have been awakened, the effect was not manifested in any change of public policy.

I will not dwell upon the trial. It was held in the Market Buildings, which were overfilled by a crowd of 2,000 onlookers. The heat was terrific. It was most interesting to watch from the dock the varying expressions upon the faces of the opponents and sympathisers as points this and that way were made. The scene was certainly dramatic after our condemnation. But I will not try to reproduce the harrowing effect here. We were marched from the Court to the gaol, and we four again occupied the condemned cell. Sawing and knocking were going on outside, which we were told was due to the erection of the scaffold. We certainly passed a thoughtful night, of which I have written a full account, embodying all my psychological reflections, but I may not include it here. Briefly, in the morning I had reached the conviction that, as everyone must die, it does not matter to the individual when. One may not want to die, but one cannot after death miss anything one has not had. One's friends, or the world, may be a loser (or a gainer!).

After rather over five months' detention in all,



SIR GEORGE FARRAR, D.S.O.



and some truly comical haggling over the amount we were to pay for our liberty, we were released. Farrar and I lived and had our businesses in the Transvaal. We were therefore obliged to pledge ourselves not again to interfere in the politics of the country, as an alternative to banishment. Colonel Frank Rhodes refused to sign, having no such consideration, and was escorted to the border. John Hays Hammond signed, but left next day for the U.S.A.

One great regret weighed upon our joy at being free men again. Two of our gallant comrades, Aubrey Woolls-Sampson and Walter Karri-Davies, both of whom played such a gallant part in the Boer War later on, refused to sign any undertaking when the general body of prisoners had been released. They could not be persuaded to change their attitude when we were discharged. So we had reluctantly to leave them in durance vile, where they remained another twelve months, until Kruger, tired of their persistence, discharged them. The grit they displayed is beyond praise. It achieved no purpose of value, however, beyond demonstrating their own resolute tenacity. Only the other day came to me the sad news of Woolls-Sampson's death. Karri-Davies is, I am happy to say, well and hearty.

We left the jail late in the afternoon of June 11th, 1896. By that date the people of Johannesburg had learned all the facts, and when we alighted at the Park Station next day Farrar and I were met by a great crowd, seized, cheered, and carried shoulder-high in triumph to the Stock Exchange,

where (in rather a dishevelled and exhausted state) we had to return thanks. On that occasion I became aware how painful and even dangerous a popular demonstration of that kind may be, for my limbs were pulled and strained in all directions, and, but for the density of the moving mass, carriers and live load would have been tripped on to the hard road at any moment. The excitement was intense, but the reflection would flit through my brain that the peril was scarcely less great, though more agreeable, than a hostile greeting might have been. It was to me an immense gratification that my wife and children were able to witness the moving scene after the days of anxiety they had suffered.

Two days later I took my departure for England with Fitzpatrick, but that begins a new chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

### POST RAID

**T**OWARDS the close of the last chapter I pointed out that by the time we regained our freedom the public of Johannesburg had acquired a fairly accurate knowledge of the case and were satisfied with our conduct. The politicians, however, in South Africa, true to type the world over, were agog to dip deeper into matters. Whether inspired by virtuous motives or by what Rhodes cynically called “unctuous rectitude” is not for me to decide. Some no doubt believed that a *post-mortem* investigation might be restorative, others were bent upon aggravating racial animosity, and yet another class, with neutral feelings, spied in an enquiry the chance of notoriety, and a supply of new material for the political kitchen. Those individuals are like hungry urchins gazing into the steam-laden window of a cook-shop. Revelling in the tantalising odours, they hope that something may somehow find its way into their watering mouths.

The line that divides the statesman from the politician is narrow, and yet what a gulf it spans ! To define the difference between them is a difficult task. Briefly, I conjecture, the true statesman puts the welfare of his country

first and his own position or that of his party second. The politician, on the other hand, worships party and popular approval above all else. In other words, his actions and his motives have, as their taproot, self. But his zeal for his party is sincere and, if it has enjoyed a long lease of power, he becomes honestly convinced that its defeat or disappearance would be a national calamity. Vain illusion! It is not parties that matter so much in the long run, but the character and sentiment of the people and the honesty and steadfastness of the permanent Civil Service. Happily in England that service has so far escaped the evil of corruption. Anyone with experience in the political sphere must be driven to the conviction that the popular conception of politics as "a dirty game" is not ill-founded. The "politicianer," to use a humorous designation invented, perhaps unconsciously, by the late Mr. Sammy Marks, is, in the main, an individual whose gaze is riveted on ballot-boxes and whose vows, if not "traced in sand," are at least held together by bands of india-rubber. There are, of course, brilliant exceptions.

The Cape Parliament had set up a Committee of Enquiry called "The Select Committee of the Cape of Good Hope House of Assembly," with full inquisitorial powers. The trial of the Raiders in England had not yet been held. We, in Johannesburg, did not know *why* they had suddenly broken bounds or what line of defence they would adopt. We were keen, anyhow, not to say or do anything that might prejudice their position. Apart, there-

fore, from any misgivings as to the impartiality of the Committee's findings, there was good ground for objecting to be a witness at that time.

I was anxious to get to the other side, and Fitzpatrick equally so, but we could not pass through Cape Town without facing the inquisition. So we went to Natal. The homeward mail steamers thence all called at Cape Town. That line was therefore impracticable. We thought of going via Mauritius and Colombo, a roundabout but feasible route. But we discovered that certain cargo boats, carrying a few passengers, made the voyage via the Cape without calling there. Investigations showed that, in spite of slow speed, one of the "U" boats afforded the quickest way to our goal. I may explain that the "U" boats have Kaffir names and carry mostly cargo between Durban and England. Our respective wives and families were sailing from Cape Town. They could not be held as hostages ! Luckily, before embarking on the good ship *Umona* I went round to the offices of Sir Donald Currie's Castle Line in Durban and explained our plight, begging my friends there in the circumstances to help us if they could. They responded to our appeal, as will be seen, by stopping the mail steamer. Fitzpatrick and I knew we were faced with a long, dreary voyage, but luckily had no idea of the adventures awaiting us.

We sailed out of the Bay and over the bar in gorgeous weather and glided peacefully into a smooth and sunlit Indian Ocean, feeling immensely relieved at being afloat and on the way to England.

But we reckoned without our host. On came the south-west monsoon. It blew with great violence and in an amazingly short time stirred up a furious sea. Our low-powered craft laboured along bravely enough but very slowly against the angry waves, which washed over us from end to end. The conditions on board were most uncomfortable. Not only had we to cling on to supports whenever we desired to move, but, to make the situation still more disagreeable, the boat had lost its cook and the food was execrable. A bath became an impossibility, for the heaving vessel shot the water out of the receptacle faster than the taps admitted it. In place of an easy voyage of two days and ten hours, it took five days to breast Table Bay. Five days of real misery, with little rest, for one was pitched about in one's bunk and had to adopt ingenious devices to prevent sudden ejection. It is not pleasant to be suddenly awakened by impact with an unyielding deck.

At this stage of the trip Fitz and I were thoroughly out of conceit with it and were ready to take some risk to avert the further forty-four days of travail confronting us. So we hit upon the brilliant idea of creeping into Table Bay in the dark and boarding a sailing vessel. The mail steamer sailed the next afternoon, and by that plan we could have boarded her too late for warrants to stop us. I put the proposition up to our skipper, and, although he was inclined to demur at such irregular conduct as that of slipping into and out of a port in the night without reporting, he went so far as to say he would

see what the weather was like when we got to the turning-point. Alas ! by then, although the gale had abated, big seas were still running, and he decided that the scheme was too dangerous and might end in the loss of the ship. On we went, very disconsolate.

Having rounded the Cape next morning, we passed into calm water, but a tremendous swell survived. At about 10 p.m. we were about to retire when the *Norham Castle* was sighted. This invested life with a new interest. She over-hauled us just before midnight. Our vessel burnt some lights ; she responded similarly. Then she passed us. We became anxious. I said to our skipper, "She is going on. Won't you fire a rocket ?" He replied, "If I do that, she will have to stop ; and if she did not wish to, they can put me in jail." Finally he burnt his fireworks again, and she replied by lighting up the heavens with a magnesium wire. Fitz said, "That is good-bye."

We felt very depressed and were on our way below when the engine bells rang and a messenger informed us that the mail steamer had stopped. A boat was lowered, with some difficulty owing to the motion, and we rowed over the half-mile that separated us. It is a thrilling experience in such conditions to be in an open rowing boat upon the vast ocean, for its size, relative to that of the big vessel, seems to reduce its proportions to those of a walnut-shell. We seemed to sink into deep valleys at one moment, to be gradually lifted to the crest of a watery mountain-range the next.

During the descent and ascent one could feel the enormous swirl of the ocean racing under our cockle-shell. At last we had caught and mounted the rope ladder thrown to us and were safely aboard. The stoppage of the throbbing engines had awakened some of the passengers, and we saw people in diaphanous garments flitting about to peep at the shipwrecked people—as rumour had it.

Next morning I walked into the cabin of Percy Farrar, George Farrar's brother, who had been a good angel to us during our confinement. He had not been awakened by the events of midnight, and got quite a fright, wondering if I were my own ghost! He was soon reassured and was heartily glad to hear our news. Fitzpatrick's wife and children were on board. My family could not get accommodation on the mail boat and had embarked on a slower intermediate ship. My wife could not believe her eyes when she saw me on the quay at Southampton waiting to greet her. I could see by her excited gestures that she was rallying one of the ship's officers standing beside her on the *Umona* having beaten—as she thought—the intermediate liner. Her exultation on that head was short-lived.

We proceeded to our hotel in London, and, of course, the tragedy with which I had been connected caused me to receive a very unwelcome amount of public attention. The snapshot fiend, less common than to-day, occasionally tracked us and snapped us, and in theatres and restaurants someone generally recognised us, and, before long, one saw unknown persons pointing us

out to their companions. The autograph hunter was another intruder. We might have been yellow people, humpbacked, or two-headed for the rude curiosity we excited. It is not pleasant to be such conspicuous objects, and I learned then how hard it must be for royal or other folks, either celebrated or notorious, to be everlastingly stared at.

I had much to do in London and many threads to pick up and unravel, but, being anxious about affairs in the Transvaal, I was back there in three months. Very shortly I received a letter sent through my lawyers in Pretoria, under the instructions of President Kruger, asking whether I was prepared to give evidence upon certain matters in my letter-book. On the same day a few of the more progressive members of the Raad called on me with the information that the evidence sought had reference to money I had paid to assist in their election, and they begged me to refuse. The object was to find an excuse for expelling them. As I had had one experience, while in jail, of being marched down between two policemen to the Court to be examined upon another matter on which I refused to speak, I was in no mood to oblige President Kruger's Government. I refused to comply, and pointed out that my copybook had been seized for the purpose of seeking incriminating evidence against me and was used for that purpose. I had been punished, and demanded the return of my book, to which they had no more right than to my watch. I was the more resolved to get it, if I could, as a most improper use had been made of it in publishing garbled extracts.

My lawyer in Johannesburg expressed the opinion that if I stayed in the Transvaal I should be perpetually harassed and would be unable to conduct my affairs or live there in peace. He concluded, indeed, by suggesting that under a *besluit* (an order of the Executive Council having the force of law) I might be arrested on any flimsy grounds to be once more under their control. Feeling the situation too unhappy for me, I decided to leave the country. By threat of legal proceedings, I finally secured the return of my letter-book and was able to produce it and draw attention to the misuse made of it at the British Parliamentary Enquiry. The Government was, I think, determined to force me out of the country, as manifested by subsequent proceedings.

Sir John Willoughby wrote an article in *The Nineteenth Century* containing an account of the Raid which I considered grossly unfair to the Reformers. I replied in a short article, and received many letters of thanks from comrades who had shared the heat and burden of that ill-fated time. Messages of approval came from many others who had not been associated in any way with the movement, but who had followed events, and sympathised with the attitude of Johannesburg. But the Transvaal Government felt aggrieved at my refusal to promote their political desires and pounced upon the article to enforce the suspended sentence of banishment. Most unjustly they charged me with a breach of my pledge. I was in a very unpleasant position and promptly took legal advice as to whether I could institute

proceedings to reinstate my good name. I give below the opinions of two eminent Queen's Counsel to whom the case was submitted, and though the nature of the pledge exacted from me constituted the Executive Council sole judges, leaving me no redress, the opinions now printed *in extenso* exonerate me from the charge of having violated my promise. Here is the document :

MR. LIONEL PHILLIPS AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC

JOINT OPINION OF MR. ARTHUR COHEN, Q.C.,  
AND MR. COZENS HARDY, Q.C., M.P.

Before answering the particular questions, we think it right to point out that, in our view, it is not competent to Mr. Phillips to raise the *legal* question whether what he has written or done is a breach of his pledge. He has agreed that "the opinion of the Executive Council" shall determine whether he has or has not kept his word of honour, and we do not think any Court could take into consideration the reasonableness of the opinion expressed by the Executive Council. He is, by the terms of his pledge, debarred from successfully raising any such point.

1. We are of opinion that Mr. Phillips in no way violated his pledge by writing the article in *The Nineteenth Century*. That pledge was that he would not "either directly or indirectly meddle with the home and foreign politics of the South African Republic." It seems to us that the article is an historical narrative of past events, intended only to vindicate his own conduct, which has been impugned, and that it cannot be regarded as

a "meddling with" the politics of the South African Republic within the meaning of the pledge.

2. We think that the pledge ceased to be binding when the Transvaal Government announced their intention to enforce the decree for banishment, the suspension of which was the consideration for the pledge.

ARTHUR COHEN.

HERBERT H. COZENS HARDY.

TEMPLE,

*February 19th, 1898.*

Thus I became established once more in my native land. Life seemed very calm and pleasant after the agitating times I had passed through. Besides very interesting work in the City, as a partner in Wernher, Beit & Company, I soon found a welcome place in kindly social circles and devoted my leisure to many attractive hobbies, including sport. The amenities of European civilisation, continental travel, the opportunity of studying the vast arena of world-affairs, music and art at one's door as it were, and a congenial environment of friends and acquaintances were no mean solace in exile.

Still, my heart was always sore when my thoughts turned to South Africa. There is a mysterious immensity associated with it, and, excluding brief holidays, I had dwelt there twenty years and had lived every moment of the time. In a small community every active man connected with large undertakings has a recognised status. He can get things done. He can at times be a factor in leading opinion and is able to see the

result of his efforts. In London, the greatest centre in the world, he feels himself just a cipher and soon finds his level. Nothing is more wholesome for a man who becomes rather a personage overseas than to mingle with his betters over here. Any tendency to swelled head is quickly cured. If he "fancies himself" in any direction, he will assuredly meet superiors even in his pet field of accomplishment. I hope I am not unduly enamoured of myself, but my wife always encouraged visits to England, not perhaps only on account of the sobering effect they might have upon me in tempering any tendency to "uprightness," but, if I dare say so, because the shops here and in Paris are dear to the feminine love of tasteful clothes and other irresistible adornments.

I settled down at Tylney Hall in Hampshire, thinking the rest of my life would be spent there among genial neighbours and in a most attractive locality. I found plenty of useful and interesting occupation in connection with county matters and the investigation of traditional customs of the country-side, some of a very feudal type, arising from the pronounced conservatism of the people. Thus I was brought into touch with the late Earl of Northbrook, through whose kind offices I became a Deputy Lieutenant and Justice of the Peace. In due course I filled the ancient office of High Sheriff. Little did I then dream that stern duty would cause me to drag up my roots again and replant them in Africa. Such proved to be the case in a few years. But I must interrupt my own story to make a brief reference to stirring events that tran-

spired in South Africa during my enforced absence. The promise of reforms made by the Transvaal Government, during the march of Jameson and while the Reformers were deemed far more formidable than circumstances allowed them to be, remained unfulfilled. So far from the grievances of the *uitlanders* being redressed, they were intensified. President Kruger and his Hollander advisers not only maintained all the disabilities imposed upon them, but steadily intrigued with foreign Powers to undermine British supremacy in South Africa. The history of the appointment of Sir Alfred (now Viscount) Milner—approved by all political parties in the House of Commons, a rare tribute to an official—and the despatches, numerous and voluminous, that passed between Milner, Kruger, and the Colonial Office are admirably abbreviated in Iwan Muller's *Lord Milner and South Africa*. I will not, therefore, delay over the rights and wrongs of that time. One thing is certain. The great majority of men in England held the opinion that the position of the paramount Power had to be asserted, by force of arms if need be, or it would cease to exist.

Apart from the question of her right to interfere in the internal government of the Transvaal, questionable under a strict interpretation of the Convention of 1884, she had the inherent right of any Government to challenge the oppression of her subjects, and the insistence of President Kruger upon the abrogation of Article Four of that Convention, which obliged the South African Republic "to conclude no treaty or engagement with any State or

nation other than the Orange Free State, nor with any native tribe to the eastward or westward of the Republic, until the same had been approved by Her Majesty the Queen"—which was the backbone of the suzerainty—made the moral case for intervention irrefragable.

The war ensued upon an ultimatum by President Kruger. Upon its vicissitudes, the errors of the campaign, and the sore subject of the concentration camps, conceived as a merciful act and exemplifying Macaulay's dictum that it is cruel to import into war the spirit of peace, I will not enter. When hostilities began, I got into touch with General Sir Redvers Buller, who invited me to accompany him on active service. My partners were strongly averse to my going, and the argument that I might, by such procedure, imperil the safety of my own associates in Johannesburg caused me reluctantly to remain in England. As the war progressed, and especially when mistakes were made which I thought my experience might have helped to avert, I naturally felt heartsore.

I did what I could in London. At the outset Mr. George Wyndham, the Secretary for War, sent for me and explained that the Admiralty tariff for shipping caused delay in forwarding troops, and asked me to raise a fund and get some speedy vessels under offer of which it would permit the use. Enquiries were put on foot and revealed the strange coincidence that several firms were engaged in the same quest, and indeed we were bidding against each other, to the benefit of the freight market ! Mr. Wyndham was a most charming man, dis-

tinguished in literature, but certainly unversed in business practice, for, in the innocence of his heart, he had actually invited others to undertake the same task. In such a matter individual action is, of course, imperative.

I took a hand in the formation of that renowned regiment the Imperial Light Horse, in which many of my friends who were identified with the Reform movement served, joined the Committee that raised the C.I.V. under the Lord Mayor of London, and generally speaking, rendered what small service I could.

No useful purpose would be served by following the campaign, which, by the light of the appalling barbarity displayed in the Great War, was carried on by both sides humanely—if such a term may be applied to warfare. Underrating the foe, and making use of frontal attacks in the earlier stages, proved disastrous to British arms, but better methods, superior numbers, and attrition gradually overcame the Republics. It is a sorry story withal.

For those with large affairs in South Africa, the restoration of peace brought a host of problems, which were gradually solved.

My circle of friends and acquaintances had grown during the intervening years, and, as a result, I was selected to contest the North Paddington seat in the Conservative interest at the next election. I held many meetings in that constituency. This was in 1905, when the Chinese labour cry was potent and proved the undoing of the party in power. North Paddington is a lively area in which the vote of the working class predominates. At

my meetings the excitement was always white-hot, and hecklers not only shouted themselves hoarse but perspired freely in their frenzied earnestness. They never broke up any of my meetings, though they came near to it on an occasion when Mr. Marshall-Hall, in return for my having addressed one of his meetings, spoke for me and quite lost his temper with the ill-mannered opposition. The audience, and particularly those on the platform, became quite alarmed. My second son, then at Eton, said he enjoyed the wordy battles in his holidays quite as much as, if not more than, a play.

But affairs in South Africa were not going well. The war was over. The restoration of the country proceeded slowly and painfully. My senior partner, Sir Julius Wernher, went out to the Transvaal for a visit. On his return he persuaded me to follow his example. I did not intend to remain there, but on my return to London he, Alfred Beit, and many correspondents in the Transvaal pressed me to resume my old position in charge of the local firm, and I felt it my duty to agree. I had to abandon North Paddington, and the seat was eventually lost to the Liberals, principally owing to two aspirants upon our side contesting it. I should probably have won it, in spite of my association with the unpopular Chinese labour importation, not because of forensic gifts or Conservative principles, which the tide of public opinion was against, but because I had been condemned to death. In visiting cabmen's shelters and mingling with groups of costers and others, I was invariably asked if it was true I had been sentenced to be hanged,

and, upon replying in the affirmative, was almost equally invariably assured of their votes *on that account!* Party views went by the board.

Thus once again I traversed the ocean to face many difficulties and turbulent times. The move was a horrible upheaval for my wife and myself. People who have the good fortune to lead settled lives in a fixed abode cannot appreciate the labour and vexation of spirit entailed by a roving existence. I had been in England nine years, and, though still in close touch with affairs in South Africa, had contracted a well-established anchorage at home, had tasted many pleasures and engaged in various interesting enterprises, such as Roman and Egyptian excavations. Nothing is more fascinating than the extraction of history buried under centuries of debris or sand. In my day research was not rewarded by any discoveries to vie with that of the Rosetta stone or the recent discoveries at the tomb of Tutankhamen, but there were thrilling moments and valuable finds withal.

With the conclusion of the Peace of Vereeniging I was free to go back to the Transvaal. I arrived there again to resume my former activities in 1906, expecting this move to be final—a sad illusion, as time will show. Business was bad. The political outlook ominous. The Chinese labour question and the infamous placards, representing men in chains being flogged to the mines, had done their work. Given ample ground for differences of opinion on that subject, there never was the slightest justification for the blood-curdling cartoons provided for the consumption of the innocent

British public to win their votes. Persons who came from the Rand to advocate the abolition of Chinese labour were in most cases honestly convinced that the system was vicious, but those who addressed meetings where the walls were plastered with the cruel cartoons referred to, without uttering a word of protest against the libel perpetuated, were traitors to the Rand community.

It was never intended to employ Chinese permanently. Their importation was costly and they introduced a new racial factor into a country already overburdened with racial problems. The English and Dutch were not exactly brotherly in their relations, and between them they had to govern Kaffirs, coloured men, and Indians, exceeding them numerically by six to one! It is not surprising, therefore, that the presence of thousands of Chinese should have caused serious misgivings.

The Liberal Government came in with a big majority. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman became Prime Minister and Mr. Winston Churchill Colonial Secretary. They speedily proceeded to reverse the policy of their predecessors in office. The Lyttelton Constitution for the Transvaal and Orange River Colony (framed but not put into force) was scrapped, and responsible government conferred upon the two countries forthwith. After my flying visit to the Transvaal in 1905, when the future status of that Colony was in the melting-pot, I wrote *Transvaal Problems*—a political study of the time—and supported the introduction of the Lyttelton Constitution for a time to bridge the great change from Crown Colony to full self-

government. I thought, and still think, that under its provision a stepping-stone to the higher grant would have been provided. Lord Milner's great work in framing the civil administration would have become firmly established and its benefits would have been more clearly manifested and more securely rooted before the change took place.

Some people argue that the full trust reposed in the Boers by the Liberal Government won their allegiance and adhesion to the Empire. They think that an interval of Representative Government, as designed by Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, would have resulted in their dissatisfaction and refusal to participate in the Great War. I, personally, doubt that reasoning, but an elaborate argument upon a purely speculative subject can serve no useful purpose, so I shall leave the matter there. The Boer leaders undoubtedly stood for Responsible Government, and carried with them quite a respectable section of the British home-born and colonial inhabitants. They won the day. A Commission under Sir West Ridgeway was sent out to delimit constituencies. They differentiated in favour of country against town, and a Boer majority resulted. It was commonly rumoured that the partiality displayed to those who had so recently been at war with England was not unconnected with the repatriation of the Chinese. Be that as it may, His Majesty's Government, in fulfilment of election pledges and aided by Mr. Churchill's "terminological inexactitudes," acting through General Botha, who had become Prime Minister of the Transvaal, got rid of the Chinese.

Before quitting that subject I am impelled to say that the restoration of the mines and of South African prosperity after the Boer War was due to the importation of Celestials. They were efficient and, on the whole, docile labourers. Their example was of immense value in teaching the Kaffirs, who manifested little inclination to return to work in the required numbers after hostilities ended. During the gradual removal of the Chinese, the Government certainly took active steps to assist in recruiting native labour, and the adverse economic effect of the change was thus minimised, but nevertheless it was severe.

During my visit in 1905 the fruits of Lord Milner's sapient rule were visible in every direction. He had surrounded himself with a body of well-chosen, highly educated, and honourable officials from England. The Hon. Sir Arthur Lawley was made Lieut.-Governor of the Transvaal. He is justly held in the highest esteem. They not only brought hard-headed and clean thought to the heavy problems awaiting solution, but, since the field for their activities was closed in South Africa, have achieved distinction elsewhere. "The Kindergarten," as they were styled, contained some notable men—Geoffrey Dawson, now editor of *The Times*, Lionel Curtis, a genius with whose ideas and actions in the higher political sphere, however, many do not agree, John Buchan, historian and novelist, Patrick Duncan, a member of General Smuts's *late* Government, Philip Kerr, best known perhaps as Secretary to Mr. Lloyd George during critical times, Perry, Hichens,

formerly treasurer of the Transvaal and now chairman of Cammell, Laird & Co., Craik, F. B. Smith, now a Professor of Agriculture at Cambridge, and many more.

The foundations were solidly laid. A splendid system of education had been introduced and a competent body of teachers engaged to carry it out. The Courts of Justice and police commanded the respect of everyone, and an Agricultural Department, in which distinguished specialists were engaged, had been founded. All the attributes of a well-ordered State were visible, and I think it true to say that the system has not improved since then in theory or practice. But Lord Milner's benevolent reign as High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief came to an end. After his retirement he was served as many another patriotic representative of the country had been served before him.

The party in power had attained its victory on a foundation of hypocrisy and misrepresentation. Whatever view may be held on the Chinese Labour question (and I admit on racial grounds differences of opinion upon that subject were reasonable), the election was won not upon its merits, but upon the false ground that it amounted to an introduction of slavery. That lie did its work with the freedom-loving British nation. In truth the coolies were recruited voluntarily. An organisation was created by the Chamber of Mines to avert any possible malpractices in engaging the labourers, and men of the highest integrity and of good standing were sent to China to supervise the operations. Contracts were made with each recruit,

at wages far higher than he could earn in China, and every precaution was taken for his safety and comfort *en route* and in South Africa. There was no justification for the detestable allegations of duress at any stage. Inspection, to ensure good treatment, took place everywhere. The best evidence of the care exercised is found in the excellent health and happiness of the coolies and the bitter regrets expressed by them at their forced repatriation—the only matter in regard to which force was used. Of course the class from which they were drawn is not one that could be expected to supply men of exalted tendencies in morals or manners, and a certain amount of crime was committed, not solely attributable to the Celestials, for the reef trader is not always a “plaster saint,” and some of the assaults were due to his misdeeds.

When the project to import the Chinese was mooted, there was a good deal of local discussion and disagreement on the subject of the policy involved. The need for labour was indisputable. The Boers did not show any pronounced hostility. That only appeared with the agitation worked up in England. Then General Botha and his ministers joined the hue and cry—naturally enough, too, for did not this question offer a chance of defeating the hated Conservatives, who had fought the war? What alluring prospects opened if the Liberals could once more be placed in control! Did not that party under Gladstone swallow defeat and restore independence to the Transvaal?

When the Chinese cry had done its work, and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman became Prime

Minister, Botha's attitude became suddenly vehemently opposed to the Chinese. I cannot say it had ever been very favourable, but it had not been particularly antagonistic before. All at once it blazed into heated intensity. The Chinese must go, whatever might befall. Rumour suggested that underneath the smoke, which hid proceedings from the general view, there was a little fire of *quid pro quo*!

But I will not flog this long-dead animal any further. It was necessary to make this short survey to explain what follows. Milner had allowed the Chinese to come: Milner must be discredited. Milner had upheld British honour and protected British subjects. Milner was anathema to the party at the helm, that always has and always will look at the affairs of its own kith and kin through foreign-coloured spectacles. Milner had fallen from grace. Milner, truly liberal in domestic policy, had proved a staunch imperialist in national affairs. A campaign, shameless, ungrateful, hypocritical, was launched against him. All his outstanding services, his nobility of character, his high gifts, and his unflagging industry were to be expunged somehow from the public mind. His reputation must perish. So ran the edict of the newly elected Government. Venom manufactured at the head centre was supplied to the lesser reptiles and used to poison the reputation of a great man. The process resembled a tropical storm on a hilltop, which, spreading itself in a myriad streams, takes devious routes until all the branches unite at the base of the slope. Then, in a well-worn channel, they constitute a flood capable of overwhelming

anyone in its course. Truly despicable, and of such stuff is party expediency.

Milner, serene in his conscience, not at any time voluble, proud, loyal, and reserved, bore all and trusted time to redress his wrongs. And how time has punished his traducers ! Some men, deserving of high fame, have been less fortunate, and their reputations lie buried in their silent graves, their memory unhonoured and unsung. Historians sometimes resurrect them, though the conflict of contemporary literature, upon which their researches are based, may leave their judgment warped and hence their verdict at fault. But Time's Court of Justice did not tarry. The Great War came, and with it the black days. To whom did those in authority turn in their trials and tribulations ? To Lord Milner, against whom some of those self-same men had conspired ! There came the opportunity. Most of us know something of the immense burden of labour, decision, and responsibility Lord Milner carried. He is safe now, and the future historian will find no difficulty in awarding him his great and rightful place in the annals of his country.

I was happily in time to attend the farewell banquet given to him in Johannesburg. He was succeeded by the Earl of Selborne, an excellent choice in the circumstances, for his quiet manners, as well as his knowledge and love of husbandry, made an instant appeal to the Boers. A statesman of wide experience and urbane disposition against whose fairness and integrity not a breath of suspicion could be exhaled.

When I again settled down in the Transvaal in 1906 the condition of political affairs was deplorable. General Botha was in the saddle as Prime Minister. The Boers were, of course, elated, the British correspondingly depressed, the ill-feeling acute—so acute, indeed, that my friends of the Opposition in the Legislature were hardly, if at all, on speaking terms with the members of the Government. Serious trouble appeared inevitable unless a *modus vivendi* could be arrived at.

I look back upon this period as the most trying, and perhaps in the end the most useful, of my career. With the Boers in power, and little prospect of their losing it, the maintenance of personal enmity must have been damaging, if not quite disastrous. So I set to work deliberately to devote all the effort and such persuasive arguments as I could command to change the mutual relations, and in this work I was vigorously supported by my wife. Born in the country, and an ardent South African, she agreed with my standpoint and threw herself into the task of trying to realise it.

I got into touch with Generals Botha and Smuts and gradually established friendly, even intimate relations with them. My friends Farrar, Chaplin, Fitzpatrick, and others looked askance at my efforts. Not so the general population of Johannesburg. Naturally men who had been in the throes of all the turmoil succeeding the war felt sore at their treatment by the British Government and were not free to look at the position dispassionately. I came back with a

fresh mind, untinted by the angry hues that coloured the outlook of my friends. The Prime Minister and General Smuts stayed occasionally at my house, and we arranged a few social gatherings there and in the town to bring them into personal touch with well-known people of our side. I never left our party, or pretended to do so to my new Boer friends, and gradually, almost insensibly, the tension became slackened.

Anyone who has had experience of Parliament knows that a Government, once having consented to a measure being tabled, dislikes either radically amending or withdrawing it under the batteries of an Opposition, and when it is on bad personal terms with its opponents no inkling of the measure may be given before it becomes public property. Then dignity trails its coat and anything may happen. I made it my mission in those days to keep abreast of proposals, and often, by explanation prior to publication, was able to point out defects or ulterior consequences in their proposed legislation which had not occurred to the Government. The result was, after agreement had been reached, that the proposals were either not brought forward or were modified.

In due course my friends realised that the line taken was not without value, and imperceptibly adopted a less actively hostile attitude to the Government and to me. The political horizon gradually cleared, and upon revisiting England in 1909 I was entertained at a public dinner. This kind mark of appreciation gave me immense gratification, for I had done my little best according to my lights.

Lord Lovat presided and was supported by a large company, including not only my friends, whose partiality may have drawn them to the feast, but many distinguished public men. As a memento of the occasion I was presented with a very handsome silver bowl, which I prize greatly.

At this period an old and very serious trouble became acute. Inter-colonial customs tariffs and railway rates had always been a source of dispute. In an earlier chapter I discussed the angry situation that developed when President Kruger closed the drifts over the Vaal River to favour the Delagoa line and avert competition from the Cape and Free State Railways. The solid fact remained that Natal, the Free State, and the Cape Colony all depended to an important extent upon Transvaal trade. Relative to her, with her large output of gold and other minerals, they were poor relations. A jealous rivalry prevailed, and each participant did his best to get the lion's share. Irritation of quite a serious character was generated, and although in earlier days an appeal to arms was imminent, it became unthinkable after the Boer War. A conference of representatives of all the entities was convened and proved abortive. The deadlock actually paved the way to Union, for everyone realised that the bitterest relations would follow failing a solution acceptable to all. Lord Selborne wrote a memorable paper on the subject which was unanswerable in its logical elucidation.

General Botha, with that breadth of vision which more than any other attribute entitles him to rank as a great man, summoned the National Convention.

Previous to its assemblage, the great questions of federation or unification were thoroughly canvassed. Opinions were very divided on the subject, earnest advocates taking opposite sides in the controversy, which threatened to become a dangerous stumbling-block to the settlement of the much desired and required agreement. I took up a decided line in favour of unification and published a temperately worded letter, setting out the arguments as forcibly as I could, without saying anything that might stimulate passion on the part of the federationists. The main contention, which appealed to many, was the undeniable one that in a federation each colony would disclose, through its trade statistics and budget, the advantages or disadvantages of the combination. This would have led to heated representations by those who found themselves worse off, and to disputes, or finally even to disruption.

I was not a member of the National Convention, in spite of being then personally friendly with both political parties in the Transvaal, because the delegates were chosen exclusively, and properly, from members of the Parliaments concerned. The National Convention met. The lion lay down with the lamb. That terrible dragon, racialism, never lifted his head. The debates were conducted with great decorum and in an atmosphere of the utmost goodwill. All difficulties were surmounted and the Act of Union was born. The creation of Provincial Councils for each former colony got over the aspirations of the federationists. It was a fine piece of national work,

Then came the question of forming a ministry. The people of South Africa longed to see a best-man Government in the saddle. Botha and Jameson, leaders of the respective South African and Progressive parties in the Transvaal and the Cape, were on very friendly terms. Their personal relations were of good augury for bringing about the combination. Botha was invited to form the first ministry. He was met with the demands of his old political followers in the Transvaal and of supporters of the same way of thinking elsewhere, who were opposed to any union with the Progressives, or English party, as they were regarded by the militant Dutch. Anyhow, their objections, not unmixed perhaps with a rather natural appetite for the loaves and fishes of office, proved irresistible, and he yielded. Whether a stronger man—a Pitt, a Disraeli, or a Mussolini—would have cut the Gordian knot one cannot say, but what is still more important is the question of whether such bold action would have attained the object, namely, the permanent extirpation of racialism. Writing at this date, after General Smuts has combined with the Progressives and General Hertzog has succeeded in forming an intensely racial party, one is driven to the conclusion that Botha was correct in his judgment, and that it would have been premature.

But the division of parties revived the hideous monster—scotched, but not killed. Botha was essentially a wise man with a most magnetic personality. He and Jameson had so much in common as men that I am convinced he did not



*Photo by]*

*[Leo. Weenthal.*

THE RIGHT HON. GENERAL LOUIS BOTHA, P.C. (LONDON, 1907).



abandon the idea of a best-man Government without a pang of regret. Few of the Boers have yet learned that opposite views in politics need not preclude social friendship. They are a very practical people and take politics earnestly and bitterly.

I was now forced into taking a serious decision. Being at the head of a large organisation with great responsibilities, I could not just follow my personal inclinations but had to regard the case in its broader aspect. Truly I had neither a taste nor any particular aptitude for politics. But the legislature was to sit a thousand miles away from the Witwatersrand. I could not, as before, slip over in a motor-car and interview ministers when an important issue emerged. Without disrespect, I may say that the mining industry was a sealed book to the great majority of public men, and a good many persons in, or anxious to enter, public life were frankly hostile to it. The thousands of shareholders who own the mines have, for many years, suffered the enmity of the legislature and the unfriendly jealousy of a large part of the South African public because a few men, among whom there have been individuals of poor repute, have amassed large fortunes. The absence of a generous public spirit on the part of those individuals is accountable for much of the antipathy. The hatred of the industry has also been artificially accentuated to deprive it of friends who might otherwise have lifted up their voices against the extortionate burdens and plethora of vexatious regulations imposed upon it. The "Mine

Owners" was a designation generally used in an opprobrious sense, to carry through one or another measure to the hurt of the mines. In this world we get mostly what we give. We smile and are smiled at. We scowl and are scowled at. And this platitudinous generalisation extends to material affairs. Those in charge of the mining industry could raise only a rather sickly smile when, according to custom, they were faced with abuse and the adoption of measures detrimental to the enterprises to which they gave their working lives.

The past follies of the Government in its inimical attitude, and excessive taxation of mining enterprise, are bearing unpalatable fruit for the Union. Millions of tons of ore that might and could have been worked under sympathetic treatment lie buried in the earth and can never be recovered now. The development of new ventures has been delayed and possibly lost for ever. These considerations are not of to-day. They have been almost chronic. During the five years preceding union, I do believe, without claiming any particular kudos, that my knowledge of the industry and access to Generals Botha and Smuts in Pretoria somewhat tempered the wind. What course was I now to take? After much reflection I decided, as the best course, to go into the House myself.

In view of my cordial relations with the Prime Minister and his extremely clever colleague General Smuts, I travelled to Pretoria, explained my perplexity and decision, declaring at the same time that in view of the best-man Government not being attainable, I had determined to offer my services

to Sir Starr Jameson. While regret was expressed that I could not see my way to co-operate with General Botha, my attitude was quite understood and in no way resented.

I then discussed the matter with my own side, and, after a consultation with his party organisers, Jameson asked me whether I would contest the Yeoville seat against van Hulsteyn. The constituency was essentially English, being inhabited by professional men and persons of the educated classes. It is a locality in which establishments of various sizes abound, from the large house of the successful lawyer, doctor, or trader to the small dwelling of the young clerk.

Van Hulsteyn was a partner in a large and respected legal firm, and actually acted for the firm of which I was the head. He had joined the South African party, believing that his constituents would support him in the change of faith. He was a well-known man who lived in the constituency, had served it in the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, and had an unquestionable position in the esteem of the electors. None of Jameson's other supporters was prepared to tackle it. I expected a strenuous fight, and got it. Van Hulsteyn and I were and still are, I am happy to say, on good terms, and we fought the battle without indulging in any undignified personal attacks.

Pretoria was, of course, anxious to retain the seat, and my opponent was supported on his platform by Botha and Smuts, who spoke for him on occasions. The Labour party too, that represented no labourers in the true sense, but

the skilled artisan and supervisory classes, rolled up in great force and put their prominent adherents up to heckle the "mine magnate" and to upset my meetings if possible. One day my agent was advised that they were coming with a collection of roughs to overawe the audience and prevent me from getting a hearing. He took the necessary precautions, and a lot of young men, athletes of various sorts, gathered round me and were judiciously distributed in groups to cope with any disturbance. Surely enough the row started, but before long the opposition was in part ejected from the hall and in part reduced to decorous behaviour, so the meeting was successfully held, not, however, before some nasty blows had been exchanged.

On the last public occasion Smuts came over and made a vigorous appeal for van Hulsteyn. He had evidently forgotten the interview I had had with Botha and himself prior to joining Jameson, for he expressed his surprise that I had not joined their party after being in such intimate relations with them. Perhaps he thought it good party tactics. Happily, on seeing the advertisement that he was to speak, I had a presentiment that he would aim something damaging at me on the night of our final public utterances before polling day, so I sent a shorthand writer to report his speech and, by making a longer speech than usual myself that night, and showing a delighted willingness in answering questions expansively, received the transcription in time to counter any damaging effect that night.

Polling day came. Flattering supporters of course prophesied that I had won the day. The same unction was no doubt equally administered to my opponent. After the poll closed, van Hulsteyn and I met in the counting-room. He said he thought I had just beaten him. I thought the same, but had no expectation of the great majority disclosed on the declaration of the poll. I was naturally elated at the moment of victory, but in the quietude of my own chamber had unpleasant qualms as to whether I had done the right thing in entering the unsavoury ring of politics. I should like to pay a tribute to my friend Sir Willem van Hulsteyn, as he soon became, for his fairness in the fight and his cordiality since.

Parliament met in 1910, and I was allotted a seat on the Opposition front bench. The Unionist party, as we were called, was in a decided minority, but it contained some good debaters, old parliamentary hands including our brilliant leader Sir Starr Jameson, Sir Thomas Smartt, lately Minister of Agriculture in the Cabinet of General Smuts, Sir Edgar Walton, now High Commissioner for the Union of South Africa in London, a student of finance, Sir Henry Juta, a distinguished barrister, afterwards raised to the Bench, and Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, whose name would live if only as the author of *Jock of the Bushveld*. He is a fluent speaker and a doughty champion on a public platform. He and Smartt are Irishmen with all the fiery eloquence of their race, and they could pour out a torrent of words which no mere Sassenach could emulate. Dear old Fitz too, as his friends think of him, gained a

notable victory at the polls over Botha for one of the Pretoria seats. Patrick Duncan, who had held an official position under Lord Milner and became Minister of the Interior in General Smuts's Government, Sir Charles Crewe, a newspaper proprietor, a gallant soldier, and a master of incisive thought and party practices (a Minister under Sir Starr Jameson), Mr. J. W. Jagger, too, a merchant prince (recently Minister of Railways), and many others, including clever men like Sir Bissett Berry and Richard Feetham (now a Judge), were on our side.

At times there were thrilling moments in the House, but generally I thought it rather futile and wearisome. Perhaps talking in Parliament is a good safety-valve. It gives "copy" for the press to bless or rend the orators as their partisan views dictate, and affords the public in turn subjects for conversation and argument—a healthy mental exercise; but a great many Bills passed after infinite debates and disputations do very little, or nothing, to elevate or enrich the nation and might just as well not enlarge the Statute Books. Some are positively mischievous in their effects. Mostly the legislative eye was concentrated on the mining industry, which would have enjoyed greater prosperity, to the benefit of the persons employed and the revenues of the country, had it been left alone.

Agriculture had to be handled very gently, as measures that everyone knew were urgently needed could not be carried unless a majority of the farming representatives consented. Mem-

bers for backveld constituencies, where regulations to combat pests and diseases in plant and animal life were violently opposed (and often disregarded or evaded when passed), had to walk warily, and it is not surprising that the legislative output was limited. I must admit, however, that the investigation and discussion of such problems had an educational value, and since those days it is becoming less common to hear gibes at the agricultural department, or sneers at its researches in the field of seed improvement, plant culture, etc., or at the scientific remedies prescribed for the treatment of many scourges of vegetal life and the eradication of poisonous varieties. But any Government introducing even slight additional taxation to the very modest imposts now levied upon land or its products would fall. The diamond and gold mines, therefore, occupied the attention of the House to an abnormal and unhealthy degree.

Education, a very thorny subject, sometimes produced very interesting debates, but always had to be handled timorously, because usually a point touching upon the dual language would arise, and then the temperature would go up with a rush and the atmosphere become electric. In that connection Jameson and I were trustees for a magnificent bequest of half a million by the late Sir Julius Wernher and Mr. Alfred Beit towards the Cape University. We were charged with the duty of approving the Statutes. I shall not revive the discussions that took place. We stood, of course, for scholastic excellence. There were members of the House to whom language was an obsession

who would have sacrificed higher education at the shrine of the *taal* fetish.

Native questions, naturally of supreme importance, were usually approached in a spirit of gravity and judicial propriety. But some of the members, usually bearded denizens of the backveld, who still lived in the traditions of the slave days, harboured in their minds the nomenclature of the Transvaal *Grondwet* which classified the population as *mannen*, *vrouwen*, and *schepsels* (creatures), and would upon occasions let loose a flood of wrathful invective if they imagined the sable inhabitants were not being kept in their proper place. Those who have been in touch with the natives, since the discovery of diamonds signalled the era of industrial development, know what prodigious strides they have made. Watched from day to day, the change has crept along almost imperceptibly, like the sea encroaching upon a line of coast. Looked at over a gap of years, the subtle education has eaten consistently into the savage life and produced a veritable transformation. Where will it end ? How will it end ? Momentous questions upon which to cogitate.

I look back upon my short career as a legislator with little sense of achievement or satisfaction. My experience has not been of a kind to produce a successful politician. Most of my life has been spent in the organisation of works, the direction of affairs, and the management of men. That involves plainness of speech, without troubling about diplomatic niceties, without reservations and equivocations. The man at the head of big

undertakings has to say what he thinks, not what other people would like him to think, and he must not by insinuation, innuendo, or subterfuge convey an impression different from his real meaning. How different the sphere of the politician ! He has to study what his supporters think, and when he does not share their opinions, he is often obliged to pretend he does. If he wishes to lead their opinions in any direction not entirely their own, he must act with studied discretion, leaving himself a bolt-hole, as it were. He is their servant, and it is as much as his place is worth to incur their displeasure. So in fact, in time, he acquires a subservient attitude towards the people he is supposed to represent. I am not at all a good hand at that business, and that is why I should never shine in public life. The everlasting fear of what the public will think of a given course of policy or action is a blight upon legislators boldly inclined to do the right thing. And it is the root of all the sophistry, shuffling, evasion, pretence, and hypocrisy that bring great parliamentary institutions into doubtful favour and repute. Awkward questions, i.e. those that may involve the defeat of the party in power or may be unpopular, are ignored or hushed up somehow, and the play goes on, perhaps with lasting damage to the nation.

I attended regularly at the House and performed my due share of work upon Select Committees, beating the party drum as in duty bound and suffering with bored fortitude the ill-mannered loquacity and vicious attacks of the Labour "party," which at that time consisted of four or five members.

They all attended the House systematically, and in every speech directed their thundering eloquence to the gallery and dragged in some reference to "the people" to tickle the palate of their extreme, and inconveniently watchful, supporters. The impression made was usually in inverse ratio to the extravagant vehemence used. Untruths, or half truths, were often the foundation of some tremendous indictment delivered by them with all the trappings of deep conviction—a little nauseating and a terrible waste of time.

In reviewing the four annual sessions at which I assisted (without refreshing my memory regarding the many subjects that were discussed or dealt with, which would not be of special interest here), my recollection turns to a small service I rendered which should be of lasting benefit to the Union. Since 1856 efforts had been made to establish a scientific Botanical Garden, but they had all ended in nothing beyond desultory and spasmodical speeches. When we realise that fortunes had been made by horticulturists, chiefly in Holland, through the cultivation of wild bulbs from the Cape, and that the unique native flora was being entirely neglected and destroyed, the omission to do something practical is astounding.

When I was in the House, Professor Pearson, a real enthusiast, occupied the Chair of Botany at the University. With his lamentably premature demise the country lost a highly trained and supremely enthusiastic teacher, as well as a tireless explorer in that field. He enlisted my



SCENE ON KIRSTENBOSCH, NEAR CAPE TOWN.



support and pointed out the way in which the native plant life was being eliminated by exotics and the depredations of ignorant gatherers. He appealed to my aesthetic taste and begged me to make an effort to get something done. I pleaded my profound ignorance of his subject and pointed out that, as the House was materially minded, it would be essential to show that profitable results might be reasonably expected, otherwise I feared any appeal would fall upon deaf ears. He was insistent, and retorted that the Assam Tea Industry owed its origin to a discovery in the Botanical Gardens.

Under his tutelage I prepared a speech, on the same lines as members of the Bar deal with their briefs, warned a few lovers of nature in the House of the project, and launched a motion on members' day. I descanted on the subject of pines gradually ousting the beautiful indigenous silver trees, on the rapid eradication of the Buchu plant by unskilful and careless collectors tearing out roots, on the field for research to determine which variety should be cultivated in order to extend the trade in that valuable medicinal plant, on our wonderful natural vegetation, which ranks third in the world, and upon the ideal site on the slopes of Table Mountain for a garden that should be a prized possession and attract visitors from far and wide. The House became full and the attention riveted. There was nothing really contentious in the motion, and it was freely supported, accepted by the Government, and passed. General Botha may have thought the matter would

then be dropped, as previous similar attempts had been. Not so this time. The very next day I helped to get the Botanical Society formed, and a deputation was appointed to wait on the Prime Minister, which succeeded in extracting the promise of a State grant. Thus the National Botanical Gardens at Kirstenbosch came into being. They are not being supported adequately, but steady progress is being made, and some day they should become a possession of which the Union will indeed be proud. There is a long row to hoe before they can vie with Peradeniya or Buitenzorg !

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE 1913 STRIKE

**A**TTENTION must now be turned to an important episode in 1913 which was the indirect cause of my parliamentary career being brought to an end. On May 26th a strike began at the New Kleinfontein Mine. The manager found it necessary for the mechanics employed underground to work until 3.30 p.m. on Saturdays, in place of till 1 or 1.30, to fit in with the mining shift. It was a question of a few men only, and, by a little goodwill and give and take on both sides, the differences could and should have been easily adjusted. The men struck, and the Unions, having accumulated funds (as there had been no important trouble since the abortive strike of 1907), were spoiling for a fight. Mr. (now Sir Drummond) Chaplin and I were in our places in the Legislative Assembly, and directly the trouble began to spread we warned the Government that the whole industry would be brought to a standstill if they took no action to keep order and prevent bands of strikers from marching in turn to working mines and dragging the men out. This was about the latter part of June. The workmen were not at all disposed to come out, but mob violence and untrammelled intimidation soon became formidable and prevailed.

The Government did nothing. It is always a nice point for the responsible minister to determine the psychological moment at which the use of force is called for. Premature action, in itself wrong and always unpopular, places a valuable weapon in the hands of political opponents. Want of courage and timid hesitation in the face of lawlessness and violence rapidly breed a contempt for authority. An alarming multiplication of the unruly elements, like microbes in a diseased body, follows. The consequences are always the same. Far more force becomes needed, and far more loss of life, injury, hardship, and damage are incurred.

The only safe rule to follow, and one understood by the multitude, is a rigid enforcement of good order. That is a guiding star which will never lead the minister astray. In disputes between sections of the population he ought to take up an impartial and unprejudiced attitude. Not being always imbued with the highest sense of his duties, nor insensible to the bearing of the passions of the moment upon the elections of the future, he often adopts the fatal policy of "wait and see" while the clouds of disturbance gather. Thus the community is launched in a sea of anxiety and danger. Strangely enough, when tranquillity is restored, his incompetent or craven conduct is seldom investigated. The people who have lived through the upheaval are so thankful to go about their daily affairs in peace that his delinquencies escape much notice. The authors of the disturbance are killed, wounded, in jail,

in hiding, or creeping about in sulky silence, and the well-conducted citizens, never very voluble, possess their souls in patience, in spite perhaps of very strong opinions upon the subject. So he remains immune, to act similarly (if he has the chance) on a future occasion.

Under the democratic system, organised sections of the people are apt to get extra judicial rights, as they have done in England under the Trades Disputes Act of 1906. Peaceful picketing, as it is called, is permitted by law. The peaceful side finds expression in the terrorising of any men who dare to attempt to work when other men go out on strike. This travesty provides a comical picture of the liberty on which the nation prides itself so ardently.

Freedom of speech and freedom of the press, won in days gone by after great travail, are universally accepted as salutary rights. They should never be restricted in any way in normal times. Even the tub-thumping orator, pouring mischievous and false doctrines into the ears of a gaping crowd, no doubt has his value. He is a safety-valve for the escape of froth that might be really dangerous in a closed vessel. Interference with or the suppression of meetings not transparently seditious, or called to foment disorder, is to be deprecated. It tends to drive the expression of dissatisfaction underground, into secret places, and intensifies its virulence. But to allow one body of persons to interfere with the lawful operations of another body of persons with whom they may not agree is the negation of freedom.

This anomalous condition in modern life springs from the voting power of organised bodies, bodies which have become powerful and have attracted many adherents because they are founded upon self-interest. How often, alas ! the wirepullers disregard the true welfare of the rank and file in order to justify their own existence. At times they have undoubtedly modified conditions and corrected evils in industrial agencies. At other times, so far from serving, they have definitely injured their members. Results, good or ill, are naturally the concern of those who belong to the organisations, and I have no reason to discuss them here. The point for emphasis is that popular Governments, for obvious reasons, pander to combinations of men and trim their sails, very naturally, to meet the big blasts and to gain advantage from them if possible. Hence the scales of justice are from the start heavily weighted on the side of the organised mass, whatever the merits of the dispute. Ultimately, of course, if the nation at large is not in sympathy with the strikers, the powers that be tack, or, if riots ensue, they become obliged to act for the safety of the realm, and of themselves too incidentally.

Strikes admittedly are sometimes well-founded and then generally succeed, but frivolous or needless cessations of work at the instance of ambitious agitators do far more harm to the nation at large and the working man in particular than can be counterbalanced by the benefits accruing from the other variety. That is my belief, and if some gifted statesman could devise a measure for avert-

ing the unjustifiable and inconsequent stoppages he should indeed be crowned with a laurel wreath.

Retribution, in one form or another, always overtakes improper surrender to elements of disturbance.

Chaplin and I tried in vain to impress upon General Botha and his lieutenant in charge of the Department of Mines the effect of their policy of masterly inactivity in the growing disorder. We left our places in Parliament and went up to the Rand. I visited the mines with which I was associated, and the men repeated to me in person their reluctance to strike. They could not help themselves in the circumstances. By Thursday, July 3rd, things were looking very ugly. The huge market-square was the scene of strikers' meetings, and idle crowds of sympathisers and sightseers gathered. Alarmed by this time, the Government, having only a small police force at its disposal, asked for Imperial troops. On Friday 4,000 regular soldiers occupied the market-square. Crowds gathered. There was a seething multitude. The Government prohibited strike meetings, which had become very incendiary, and there were minor fracas between bodies of police and the strikers, who, in defiance of the veto, essayed to hold meetings from a wagon they had seized. The troops did nothing beyond occasionally riding through the crowd and moving it about. No attempt was made to clear the square and establish authority. I was on friendly terms with General O'Brien, in command, and asked him afterwards why he had not cleared the square on

Friday afternoon. He replied that he thought the best course was to keep the crowd moving, as in that way he had them all together. The absurdity of this reasoning was demonstrated by the evening proceedings. By clearing the square and holding it with a comparatively small force, he could have sent detachments in various directions to break up unlawful bands. It is surely a primary necessity in subduing civil commotion to exhibit the power of control. By reducing the mass to obedience, minor bands will have some respect for constituted authority and riotous leaders can be arrested.

But I do not blame General O'Brien alone. The High Commissioner, who stayed in Pretoria, may, for aught I know, have tied his hands. The whole thing was a shameful display of pusillanimous incompetency. Large parties of strikers paraded Commissioner Street and other streets where the head offices of the mines were located and spent some energy in howling and hooting. In the afternoon things got warmer. Cabs were upset and signs of the coming riot appeared. The offices were all closed, and everyone went home in the agitated state of mind inherent in such conditions. At nightfall the destructive section got out of hand and burned the Park Railway Station and the offices and works of the Argus Printing and Publishing Company.

At about midnight, when we had all retired, I heard the telephone bell ringing. A message came through that an attack upon the Corner House, our large building, was in progress and the police

had opened fire on the assailants. I was further advised that the mob was coming on to my home, the Villa Arcadia. I roused the household, made my wife get up, and rang up my friend Charles Villiers, who soon came round in his motor-car and, in spite of her protests, carried her off to his house in safety. I suggested to the female servants that they should quit the danger-zone, but they refused to leave, saying that no one would hurt them. I could not force them to go, but my experience of mobs led me to question their confidence. I then mustered the white men employed on the place—about six in number—in the hall. Some had revolvers, and I had two shot-guns, with, alas ! only thirty cartridges. Still, had the crowd come, there would, as in all such cases, have been some moments of hesitation, and a few well-directed rounds at close quarters would probably have cooled their ardour. They might, of course, if determined enough and ready to lose men, have taken our “fort” and made short work of us. The three miles from town proved decisive, and they failed to come. We suffered a sleepless night, but nothing worse.

Next morning we went to our offices as usual. The blood-letting of the previous night seemed to have had a salutary effect. By that time the Government had become alarmed. All the morning citizens were being enrolled as special constables and arms were served out. By twelve o'clock things again became lively, and it was thought prudent to close all the offices, only one hour, however, before habitual closing on Saturdays. An

attempt was made to rush the Rand Club, and some shooting took place after midday. I saw something of that fracas. Being a well-known man, it was not healthy for me to linger about, and my friend Arthur Mullins, a hefty fellow, with another friend, walked with me as far as the railway bridge at Joubert Park, where a motor-car met us and the excited crowds were left behind.

Generals Botha and Smuts arrived in the morning and met the strike committee. Chaplin and I lived close to each other and in the afternoon we conferred on the situation. There was nothing we could do, and sinister rumours poured in. We were to be "blotted out," our houses burnt, etc., etc. I had had a good many experiences of angry crowds, and, while "familiarity breeds contempt" in regard to handling explosives or in other dangerous daily duties, a ferocious, hostile crowd is always alarming.

In the afternoon a message arrived that the Prime Minister desired some leading men of the mining industry to meet him at the Orange Grove Hotel, three miles from town, that night. Sir George Farrar, Chaplin, Imroth (representing the Barnato interest), and I presented ourselves at the appointed hour. General Botha told us that his military advisers expressed their ability to restore order in the town, but at an expenditure of blood, not only of rioters but of innocent spectators, which he was not prepared to face. "Moreover," he added, "they cannot guarantee to protect the mines nor the villages on the line of reef." He therefore capitulated completely, and in the cir-

cumstances may have been wise, for the crowd had been allowed to get quite out of hand and the formidable military array was merely an onlooker, as though it had been assembled for show.

The strike leaders were triumphant and, although operations at the mines were resumed on the Monday morning, everyone knew that trouble was merely deferred. The strikers, of course, were militant. Discipline was dead, and no one dared to offer a word of criticism, no matter how inefficient or flagrantly indolent their workmen might be. Instructions were obeyed or flouted at will. The position of the manager, like the policeman's lot in *The Pirates of Penzance*, was not a happy one. The taste of victory acted as *hors d'œuvre* before a meal and merely sharpened their appetite. The whole atmosphere was electric. Meetings of exultant agitators were held at which sinister threats against directors were the main feature, and my name, of course, was specially reviled. Things dragged on in a state of tension for some months, until, in December, I was attacked in broad daylight and nearly killed. Perhaps I had better tell the whole story.

People in Johannesburg have a habit of going punctually to luncheon at one o'clock. For some reason that I do not remember, I was detained a few minutes at the office, and, when I left, found the street almost deserted, save for the rank of taxi and horse-cabs always in evidence. Approaching the turning to the Rand Club, I saw a man emerge from a shop. He drew a bright-barrelled

revolver and fired. Being thus rudely roused from my thoughts, I was naturally taken aback, and lost a precious second or two in looking to see at whom he was firing. No one being at hand, I was obviously the intended victim. He was about eight paces away. I began to run at him when his second shot got me in the lung. I reached him and got hold of his pistol, but, alas! the shock of the impact disabled me. I had a clear vision of hitting him under the jaw with my left hand, but I could only hang feebly on to the weapon. He soon shook me off and fired at my head, missing me narrowly, for one of my eyebrows was grazed. Then I fell on the pavement, but I got up again. He fired a fourth shot, which entered my neck sideways between the carotid artery and the jugular vein, and was eventually cut out of the flesh at the back of my head. Luckily for me, it must have been a badly loaded cartridge. The people in the vicinity had, following a primary instinct, bolted away. But by this time they were steadily working up behind the would-be murderer, and after expending his fifth cartridge (which missed me and travelled through a window, burying itself in the wall of a room in the Corner House, two hundred yards away) he was collared.

At this juncture my old friend Sir Percy Fitzpatrick came on the scene and took me in his motor-car to the hospital. He was concerned to see the blood flowing from the wound in my neck; but I said, "Don't worry about that, Fitz; he has got me here," pointing to my chest. He unfastened my waistcoat and saw



*Photo by]*

*[Elliott & Fry.*

**SIR PERCY FITZPATRICK, K.C.M.G. (LONDON, 1923).**

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beneath it the red-stained shirt. He held me on his lap like a child, resting my head against his shoulder. My doctor, William Rogers, another good friend, had been summoned from lunch, and his friendly face greeted me at the hospital. I was put on my back in an ambulance trolley and undressed without any material change of position, lodged in bed, and put to sleep under morphia. Before that I must have been fully conscious, for Mr. Roxburgh, the Vicar of Yeoville, and his wife were to have dined at Arcadia that night, and I had a message sent that they were to go there, in spite of my absence. Of course, the news was speedily known, and it was a quaint idea that under the circumstances they would visit my house with my wife away. This shows how strangely the brain works in times of stress. My good lady was in Grahamstown on a mission connected with the Art Gallery, or an Arts and Crafts project. She was uneasy all that day and was so racked by a presentiment of evil at home that she determined to cut her visit short and return that night. Late in the afternoon she received the news by wire, and engaged a special train. She arrived at the hospital at 4 a.m. on the second day. Another curious incident should be recorded. Mr. W. H. Poultney, the Secretary of the Witwatersrand Agricultural Society, of which I was, and still am, the President, was out of town on business. The night before my mishap he dreamt he saw me lying dead in the street. The impression was so vivid and he felt so concerned that he rode some miles next day to a telephone station and got my

news. Strange coincidence or prevision of an impending event !

I shall not harrow the feelings of my readers by describing the grave operation which ultimately had to be performed upon me, or the pain I endured. The surgeons warned my wife to prepare her mind for my death, and later, when I paid a farewell visit to the sister of the operating theatre, she said, "I don't mind telling you now that I never expected to see you again alive after you left here." I shall never forget the wonderful care of the nurses during the critical period. They watched at my bedside, day and night, never moving except to perform some office for me. The doctors too, and especially my own medical adviser, William Rogers, gave me unstinted attention, and their intrepid skill certainly saved my life. I use the word "intrepid" advisedly, because in those days to cut out ribs and expose the lung was an almost unique operation. Daily bulletins were published and visitors in great numbers called at the hospital to enquire of and see me. My devoted wife was a vigilant sentinel and admission to the sick-room was strictly guarded by her.

I must mention one incident of rather an amusing character in the early days of my illness. I complained to the doctor of an unpleasant numbed sensation in my swollen ear. He replied, "The bullet has cut the alderman's nerve." In reply to my enquiry as to its utility, he said, "Its function is curious. When one has eaten to repletion, one may still continue the feast by dipping a table-napkin in iced water

and applying it under the lobes of the ears." I remembered then that I had actually seen men performing that innocent-looking act—but how revolting when one realises the object!

Thanks to my vigorous health and habitual moderate indulgence in alcohol, I was quite well, if still feeble, in a few months. I chuckled over an episode that took place in London. The Alliance Assurance Company, of which the late Lord Rothschild was Chairman, had insured my life. Upon hearing the news of the attack upon me, he wrote sympathetically to my friends at the office about my life being "precious"—a patent truth from the standpoint of the insurance company anyhow! He also sent for the Company's medical adviser, Sir Bertrand Dawson (now Lord Dawson of Penn), to obtain his opinion on the case. "Where have they hit him?" asked the great man; "if not in the head, they won't kill him." He knew my constitution.

General Smuts came to see me and, after making kind enquiries as to my health, told me another strike was impending and timed to break out about the New Year. I asked him whether the Government had benefited by the experiences of the previous strike, and he said there need be no apprehensions on that account. And so it proved.

The leaders of the movement, who were still suffering from the intoxication of success, expected a repetition of July on a grander and broader scale. There was to be a general strike and they were to settle matters this time. But just as Lord Ran-

dolph Churchill had not reckoned with Goschen on a famous occasion, so they had failed to reckon with General J. C. Smuts. His organisation was complete. Scarcely had the ball been set rolling than in trooped bodies of fully equipped burghers. The police had been thoroughly organised, and order was strictly maintained under the proclamation of martial law. There was no playing with fire this time in Johannesburg and the ambitious designs of the wreckers were nipped in the bud. Mass meetings were forbidden and many arrests were made. The response to an order for a general strike was very poor and half-hearted. The *coup de grâce* was given by the appearance of a field-gun outside the Trades Hall, and an ultimatum to surrender, which was wisely complied with. What a transformation from the scene of six months before!

By the middle of January all was practically over. Work was resumed in the mines, and the men, being thoroughly disillusioned, ceased to challenge the instructions of officials and settled down to steady duty. The Government made one serious mistake. They deported a number of the ringleaders without a trial. As an example of strength and the determination to suppress disorder they were no doubt right, but of course the force of British precedents was used by political opponents to cause them annoyance in Parliament. There was no further rupture until 1921, but the causes leading up to it will appear anon.

“Why were you shot?” asked many people. It is a strange story. At the 1910 elections, Patrick

Duncan was successful at Fordsburg. He wrote me a note begging me to do something, if I could, for a man who had helped him and who could not make headway in life. I gave his nominee a letter to one of the mine managers, and he was allowed to start selling fruit and vegetables to the Kaffirs. Having got on to some extent, he became more ambitious and sold on credit. Then he gradually became a nuisance on pay-days, rushing at the natives, as they were paid, to collect debts. Finally he developed into a pest at the pay-office, and the manager of the Ferreira Deep, where he operated, ordered the pay-office to be transferred into the compound. Misnum, the man in question, forced himself into the compound, and they had him arrested. Then he shot me as the head of the organisation. I had not seen him, as far as I know, since I gave him the letter of introduction three years before! Was he insane? I cannot, of course, say; but he was sane enough, as a witness testified at the trial, to spend the morning of his onslaught practising with his revolver upon trees in a plantation. So he meant to kill me. He got a sentence of fifteen years, and I have recently heard that he is now a criminal lunatic.

I had recovered sufficiently to appear and make a short speech at the opening of the Rand Show at the end of March 1914, and looked in at the House of Assembly on my way to England to recuperate. I was advised to go abroad, and got back to Tylney Hall in July, near the time of the Serajevo crime which heralded the world-war. .

## CHAPTER IX

### DURING THE GREAT WAR

ON August 4th, 1914, the greatest war of all ages broke out, and, for aught we know to-day, may have sounded the death-knell of European civilisation. I shall not touch upon the horrors or anxieties of that time. Both my sons served, the elder joining, as a private, the Witwatersrand Rifles, of which I was and have remained Honorary Colonel. He served in the German South-west African campaign, and at its conclusion came to England and joined the Royal Artillery as a subaltern, ending his military service as a staff-captain. He was gassed in France, but not seriously, and he was awarded the Military M.B.E.

My second son was a lieutenant in the Surrey Yeomanry, and was training at Canterbury with his regiment when the war broke out. Orders were given for the officers to provide themselves with special revolvers. I went with him to the London depot of a well-known small-arms factory. They made me pay £10 for a weapon previously sold at £5, and refused to take my cheque, or even to telephone to the bank to enquire whether it would be paid, insisting upon payment in gold ! I was enraged at their personal treatment (which wasted my time in securing the specie), and still

more at their extortion. Feeling that many parents might find it a tax to provide their sons at a moment's notice with revolvers at such a price, I wrote a vigorous protest to *The Times*, and the abuse was at once corrected. I took delight in going to that shop and regaining the overcharge.

Canterbury camp was in a terrible state. Heavy rains had converted the flat plain into a quagmire, and the unfortunate men were literally sleeping in the morass.

After serving a year in France, my son was transferred to the Salonica Command. For courageous service he was mentioned in despatches and awarded the M.C. He eventually became a staff-captain. The good conduct and success of both my sons were a consolation for the anxious time my wife and I had suffered while they were in the danger-zones.

My gallant son-in-law, Colonel John Stuart-Wortley, was killed on March 21st, 1918, at Bullecourt, where he commanded a battalion of South Staffords, which was almost annihilated in the last German push before the Armistice. Memory of that terrible time rises as I write in all its ghastly horror, but my recollections are shared by millions of parents and in many instances are far more heart-rending.

I must give some account of my own doings during the struggle. Soon after the outbreak of hostilities, we turned a wing of our house in England into a hospital which contained fifty beds. We gathered together a competent staff. Dr. Balgarnie gave skilled service and his wife became

matron. Ladies of the neighbourhood, some trained, some V.A.D.s, and some entirely lay helpers and chauffeurs, displayed the earnest and gentle side of womanhood in their untiring zeal, devotion, and growing value as their unusual duties became familiar. My wife gave her time and sympathy to the wounded heroes; and at night, after my return from London, I made a practice of going round the wards from bed to bed to have a friendly chat with the men who were not too ill and to cheer them up as best I might. What a fine, brave lot were those early victims of the conflict! To contemplate some of their injuries stirred one's feelings to their utmost depths. Entertainments were arranged for the convalescents, and altogether our establishment was as efficient, comforting, and gay as such a place could be.

Happily I had quite regained my health, though I still had to undergo, later on, a major operation as the indirect result of having been shot. I was mercifully overburdened with work during those times of agony. Circumstances rendered it necessary for me to take control of the affairs of the Corporation<sup>1</sup> in London soon after the outbreak of war, when the tide of feeling against men of German nationality assumed ominous proportions. Whether they were naturalised British subjects or not, the ban became general. They were all regarded as potential spies. Years of residence and good conduct made no difference. Popular clamour and the atmosphere of suspicion, coupled with the early victories of their countrymen,

<sup>1</sup> The Central Mining and Investment Corporation.

rendered life exceedingly unpleasant for them, and many businesses that were owned or administered by them were wound up. Several members of the Board of Directors of the Central Mining Corporation were of German origin, and it became my painful duty to secure their resignation to avert the danger of the enterprise being condemned to liquidate. While I naturally sympathised with the national feeling on the subject, it did not make the task of parting company with associates of many years any the less distressing. It was, perhaps, a fortunate circumstance for the shareholders that I happened to be in England at the time and able to step into the breach.

In 1916 I paid a flying visit to South Africa. Sea travel was not agreeable. At night lights were obscured and ports closed. Lifebelts were brought into prominence, and passengers were instructed where to assemble in case of emergency. Something was done every day to remind us that war was raging. We got through the outward and homeward voyages without misadventure. All sorts of sports and entertainments were organised to keep people busy and divert their minds from harping upon risks.

Within three days of England the tension, due to the submarine menace, began to manifest itself, among the women in particular. Commodore F. Talbot Ponsonby was a fellow-passenger on the homeward voyage—a charming companion and a gallant sailor. He and I used to collaborate in finding palliatives. On the Saturday night—with two and a half days still to run—the

prize distribution to winners at sports and games took place. He was chairman and I president. He had to do all the work and I merely to say a few words. That morning I overheard a passenger telling another that he had seen the smoke of a destroyer. I do not know how he recognised the type of ship by the sooty vapour ! Anyhow, it gave me an idea, and of course I communicated it to the Commodore. He heartily approved. In the course of my short remarks I said, "Passengers will, I am sure, be pleased to learn that to-day we got into touch with that wonderful instrument—the British Navy." (Great applause.) The effect aboard was remarkable. All signs of nervousness vanished. Several people asked me how I knew, but I evaded their questions somehow, and to this day Ponsonby is probably the only man who knew of the innocent deception.

My object in going to South Africa was to visit the Rand. An uninterrupted supply of gold was deemed of cardinal importance. The mines were very short of competent white men, because every patriotic Britisher, whose services were not of vital consequence, had obtained leave to join up. Inexperienced men had to be taken on in considerable numbers. The gravity of the war did not stay the activity of the Labour leaders, and, as a strike had to be averted by all means possible, concessions were made in many directions as to hours of work, weeks of leave at the cost of the companies, and so on. Worst of all, discipline and control were relaxed. The Unions interfered almost daily upon one or another detail. Surrender

became the order of the day, and there was no modesty in the presentation of demands. The directors and managers were powerless to stem the tide of growing inefficiency and constantly mounting working costs. Stores not only advanced enormously in price, but were controlled by the Imperial Government, and a special committee was set up to purchase the required commodities and allot them equitably among all the mines. Excluding two or three of the richest producers, the working cost per ton subsequently exceeded the value of the gold won at the standard price.

The outlook was serious, and a suspension of the great bulk of the operations appeared inevitable, but the producers determined to maintain output as long as possible. Relief came in July 1919, when British currency depreciated in America and, by selling gold to that country and translating the dollars accruing into sterling, a premium was derived, and the mines were able to carry on without a loss. The currency value of gold reached its highest point in February 1920, and the cost of winning gold followed suit. The inflated cost of working remained, and the Labour leaders resisted a reduction of wages or a relaxation of their cramping regulations that would impose any sacrifice upon the classes they represented. By the middle of 1920 half the industry was once again exhausting its treasure without profit and some mines were being worked at a loss.

Grave warnings were uttered by the leading men in Johannesburg. I was on the Rand from December

1920 to April 1921, and spoke at the annual meeting of the Chamber of Mines, explaining the seriousness of the situation for the mines and the pecuniary repercussion upon the general prosperity of the Union. There was no element of exaggeration in the description. But words availed nothing. I was accused of frightening the people. Labour was deaf and blind; the Government asleep or effete. I could not get anything done, and returned to England in June feeling terribly depressed at the impending speedy ruin of the great industry I had participated in building up. But I shall return to the state of the gold-mining industry a little later on, when the price was paid in blood and tears for the wanton disregard of economic laws.

After returning from the flying visit to South Africa in 1916, I was appointed Controller of the Department for the Development of Mineral Resources under the Ministry of Munitions, an office which, added to my duties as head of the Central Mining Corporation, taxed my vitality to the full. It would not be of interest to the general reader to describe our operations in detail. I secured the voluntary services of some eminent mining engineers and had a paid clerical staff. We achieved some, if not very spectacular, results and pushed up the home output of tin, lead, zinc, sulphur, barytes, etc., but, as it is impossible to charm such products out of the ground, we were only getting into our stride when the armistice came, and of course then could not compete on a purely commercial basis with the outside world. Moreover, large stocks of

metals had been accumulated, and therefore our various enterprises were, very properly, shut down.

But I got a useful insight into the inevitable strangulation of industries, in this competitive world, under public administration. I found, for instance, in a case where precipitate action was called for, there was only one way of getting it, and that was to go straight to the head of the department whose permission was required and explain the matter. Then usually one got immediate sanction or refusal, as might be determined. If the staff were allowed to write to the department concerned, one could sometimes succeed, provided no other department had to be consulted. But where more than one department became involved, a vast correspondence ensued, and nothing was likely to result. Every department was jealous of its duties and powers, real or imaginary, and it became practically impossible to stem the flood of argument.

I visited in person all the likely localities in the United Kingdom, but omitted Ireland, where I was advised there were no minerals of the non-ferrous variety to be won. Coal and iron were not included in my category. This did not suit the Irish Members of the House of Commons. A deputation waited on me to know why I had not been to Ireland, where, they alleged, I could get all that was wanted. I explained politely that their information did not accord with mine. Questions, however, continued to be put in the House, and the Minister finally instructed me to visit Ireland. I had to obey, but, beyond finding

at the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin, a wonderful variety of foods, including cream, and in any quantity (while we were being severely rationed in England), there was, as I suspected, nothing to be obtained to aid my department. Having wasted three days upon this wild-goose chase, I returned to London. The House of Commons deputation honoured me with another visit to hear a report on my mission. I treated them, of course, with grave courtesy, and upon my announcement that, in spite of diligent enquiries, the expedition had yielded nothing, they merely said laconically, “Is that so?” All the wasted eloquence was rooted in a determination to prevent the Emerald Isle being ignored. The little political comedy was over.

A much more complicated and delicate situation claimed my attention in North Wales. That country is highly mineralised and is lavishly blessed with lead and zinc mines. But the industry has languished owing to the short-sightedness of the property owners. In the early days of my controllership I tried to induce them to unite under the auspices and with the assistance of the Government, but they were so suspicious and jealous of each other that the idea had to be abandoned. Still, lead was urgently needed. The Department had to act. We soon learned that a very serious action at law was impending, in which the landlords, the mine owners, certain drainage companies, and the Roman Catholic Church were involved. An Act of Parliament had some years before been applied for to admit the driving of a tunnel into the

hillside to drain the country. A dispute arose as to whether this tunnel would not only drain the country but also the far-famed St. Winifred's Well, to which pilgrims afflicted by various bodily ills had recourse. Adjoining the well is a charming fifteenth-century church. Stacks of crutches are stored in the sacred edifice, left by the lame and halt who have benefited.

There is a legend connected with this miniature Lourdes, according to which, I am told, a Welsh prince in the long-ago sued for the hand of a lady who dwelt on the mountain-side, and, on being rejected, drew his sword and decapitated her. Not, it must be admitted, exactly a chivalrous act. The maiden's head rolled down the grass-clad slopes and was arrested in the well, whose healing powers were then discovered. A red stain upon the rock, which I did not see, is said to be still visible. The lady in due course became Saint Winifred, and the drying-up of so hallowed a fount was a matter of supreme concern.

Experts were called in by the contending parties, and, after hearing the conflicting evidence and descanting learnedly upon the geological structure, they differed, as experts are apt to do. Failing to agree among themselves as to the effect of piercing the formation, it is not surprising they did not convince the committee, and, to shorten a long story, the tunnel was driven. Before I came upon the scene the precious well had run dry. The mischief was done. It was my duty to push on with the tunnel in order to intercept the lead veins and extract the metal for the Government, but I was

threatened with injunctions and other pains and penalties. I knew if litigation began, it might continue for many years. I cudgelled my brains for a solution, and finally decided to discuss the matter with the Lord Bishop. In answer to the question as to whether the magical powers were attributable to the site or to the chemical constituents in the water, I learned that the holy place was accredited with the healing powers. That simplified the problem. A carefully concealed two-inch pipe restored the situation and, after a solemn religious ceremony, the supplicants were again admitted to the hallowed precincts. I trust that St. Winifred's Well now, as in the pre-tunnel days, puts the science of medicine in the shade by its curative powers.

The submarine menace was causing the Government grave anxiety. Not only did danger lurk in regard to maintaining essential supplies of food, but many other commodities upon which the effective naval and military services depended had to be imported. Petroleum was one of many such necessities. In the early days of my official duties I was requested to report upon the practicability of deriving a supply of oil from the petrolierous shales of England. My staff made a careful examination of the beds facing the sea at Kimmeridge and Corfe Castle, but finally I had to report that for the purposes of the war nothing useful could be accomplished. At the instance of the Admiralty I went to Portsmouth with a Committee to investigate a particular aspect of the petroleum question, and had the good fortune to see in the

harbour the two Liverpool tugs that arrived in port the day before, after their participation with the *Vindictive* in the heroic attack at Zeebrugge. We went on board the gallant little *Iris* and *Daffodil*. The latter, I think it was, had received the greater punishment. She was indeed in a battered state, and her wardroom, into which a shell had penetrated and exploded, killing many men, was in a scarcely recognisable condition.

I served, too, upon the Marquis of Crewe's Committee on Petroleum. Those were indeed full days of work and anxiety.

During the war I had been in France on duty twice. The second time I was permitted to witness an engagement of a minor type. Still, massed artillery were engaged, and it was an awe-inspiring sight, as well as an ebullition of sound hardly imaginable. In the days of the open workings at the diamond mines the blasting at midday of huge boulders resembled gunfire. But there we had the shelter of inverted trucks, covered with sand-bags, and, although the noise was deafening and lumps of stone flew about, we were protected, and the only danger arose from premature detonation occasioned sometimes by bad fuses, or by cutting their length too stingily. But I am forgetting the air raids, with which all Londoners are familiar, and which were not free from sound !

I had also a trip in a Farman bi-plane with a noted pilot, Captain Valentine (afterwards killed). He performed some of the stunts then known, but it was anterior to the feat of looping the loop (happily perhaps for me) and other upsetting evolutions.

To conclude this sketch of the events with which I was connected during the world-tragedy, and which are so petty and unimportant in comparison with it, without a word to express my own consciousness of that fact, might be misjudged. It would be superfluous, of course, for me to traverse any of the great events of that time. Everyone who lived through the period will remember its horrors and anxieties as long as he breathes, and more vividly than anything else in his life. But it may not be out of place to say a brief word about events in the country of my chief recollections. It was in South Africa that the wise General Botha and his talented lieutenant General Smuts showed their courage and patriotism. General Botha (for an account of whose actions I refer my readers to Lord Buxton's book bearing that statesman's name) must have taken up arms against his fellow-countrymen in rebellion with an aching heart, and, having vanquished them, in response to the request of the home Government, he conquered the enemy in South-west Africa. There was no hesitation, no trimming, but a whole-hearted support of the Empire. General Smuts, under his guidance, turned his attention to East Africa, and in a very arduous campaign added that territory to the British possessions. It is unnecessary to follow either of those distinguished men in their perplexities or their successful operations, but I should feel guilty had I omitted to revive the memory of their deeds, for they entitle them to the high place in history which will be theirs.

## CHAPTER X

### THE RAND REVOLT

I HAVE already referred to the perplexities that beset General Botha in the choice of colleagues for the first Government under the Act of Union. He did not feel able to disregard old party divisions and entrust the administration, without racial considerations, to the most competent public men. That he deplored and disliked that line of cleavage, and realised the danger of it, is manifested in his consistent plea for unity between the Dutch and English sections of the population. He preached that creed with tireless fidelity, and although opinions may differ as to whether or not his great prestige, and the fraternal sentiments displayed at the National Convention, would have been powerful enough to sustain the bold stroke of cutting a diagonal line across the races in ministerial offices, had he ventured upon it, there is no doubt his personal inclinations, his friendly association with and admiration for Jameson, and his ardent desire to see racial animosities buried, all lay in that direction. His ultimate expulsion of General Hertzog from his Cabinet, because that irrepressible racialist insisted upon advocating the "two-stream policy," aimed at keeping Boer and

Briton apart, and publicly assailed the Imperial association, is a tribute to his courage and sincerity.

I have watched General Hertzog's career in and out of the House with great interest, and have never been able to make up my mind whether he is a misguided and perverted patriot or a mere self-seeking politician. It would seem strange that an educated and studious man in these unsettled days, and in a land where the white race is but a fraction of the inhabitants, should not realise the value of the link (slight though it may have become) with a powerful combination of peoples in the Empire. It is stranger still in that land of native hordes that a man so endowed should seek to divide the white people into two camps. Recently a precarious and incongruous alliance has been arranged with Labour, but, as the Nationalists are *au fond* a party of ultra-Conservatives, the combination which might wrest the reins of office from the South African party some day is not likely to be happy or enduring. Their tactics rather savour of a lust for power at any price.

There is a danger of a most insidious character that should not be ignored. From causes which need not be probed here many Boers born and bred on the veld have drifted into the towns. They constitute a large majority of the men in the mines. That class and the *bijwoners* (persons who by arrangement live upon but do not own farms) offer fruitful soil for socialistic and communistic propaganda. The Nationalist party is, of course, dependent for its support upon the well-to-do classes. Do the farmers, who may in political opinions agree with

General Hertzog, realise the risk they are running ? Does General Hertzog perceive the yawning abyss in the making ? Mr. Tilman Roos, the most violent and probably the cleverest of the prominent Nationalists, stands for a Republic pure and simple. Does he realise the social jeopardy ? It would appear that all these people are so obsessed with the hatred of General Smuts and the South African party that they envisage only tactics for their destruction. Otherwise they are infinitely more cunning than is commonly supposed and hope to tear in pieces the social fabric of the nation. To contemplate a revolution in the organisation of the white social system, holding the native pre-ponderance in view, seems to me irrational. Of the attitude of labour Leaders little need be said. They seem to be opposed to everything that exists, without any well-defined or avowed objective beyond securing a share in the Government if they can, and destroying their own followers by an attack upon capital in industry.

General Smuts has a difficult rôle to play in these troubled seas. He is a skilful pilot who scans the surface of the waters vigilantly and sees a rock quicker than anyone else. Prior to the untimely death of General Botha, it became evident that his more extreme Dutch followers were transferring their allegiance to the Nationalists. He was indeed kept in power during the war by the loyal support of the Unionist party. That artificial state could not endure. If the Unionists, as the official opposition, had perpetuated the anomalous relations, their influence would speedily have

disappeared. To all intents and purposes they had become a wing of Botha's supporters to counter-balance the defections from his own camp. After the elections held in March 1920, General Smuts invited Sir Thomas Smartt, Mr. J. W. Jagger, and Mr. Patrick Duncan to join his Cabinet, and the two parties coalesced. The arrangement has worked well on the whole. Both parties have had to modify their programmes somewhat, and, if the stalwarts of the British section think that too much consideration is given to the claims of the Dutch section, the Boer adherents of nationalist propensities think the reverse, and probably as happy a reconciliation as possible of conflicting views has been attained.

I will now turn from the review of matters in the purely political sphere to industrial affairs on the Rand. I have already described the parlous state of the gold-mining industry at the time of my visit during the first half of 1921, and my failure to awaken in authoritative quarters any appreciation of the impending disaster.

General Smuts came to England and returned to the Cape in August of that year. I determined to make a last effort to save the Government from plunging over the economic precipice for which it was blindly heading. Having been at home only two months, I was not hankering after a voyage, but the call was urgent. So I packed up and accompanied Smuts and Smartt in August on the good ship *Saxon*. Besides the Cabinet Ministers, the company included the Duke of Orleans, The Hon. Sir Arthur, Lady, and Miss Lawley, Sir

Thomas Smartt's two charming daughters, and other well-known travellers.

We had a rather disturbed voyage. Among the passengers was Captain W. L. Elder, R.N., on his way to Simon's Town to take command of H.M.S. *Dublin*. Soon after leaving Madeira a good deal of smoke emerged from the side of the vessel. In the course of a tramp on deck with him, I said, "Where do all these nauseous fumes come from?" He replied, "Don't you know? The bunkers are on fire." In all my trips I had never met that experience before. He told me not to mention the matter to other passengers—an injunction which, of course, I readily obeyed.

On we steamed, past Cape Verde, the smoke continuing persistently without any apparent change. Every day he said the staff thought the fire was being got under. After passing Sierra Leone some 300 miles, with our bow directed to Table Mountain, and in a region where the ship would soon be farthest from land, a message was sent to General Smuts, with whom I was strolling up and down, that the Captain wished to see him. He invited me to go along too. The skipper told us that the fire, so far from being subdued, had now burst out in the bunkers on the other side of the ship, and made things look nasty. He said he proposed to make for Ascension, where he thought he could get help. The General, of course, told the Captain to do what he thought right. The heat and the fumes by that time were becoming still more unpleasant and some of the cabins were so hot that it became necessary to remove the

woodwork and keep them flooded. The nature of the trouble must by that time have been known fairly generally, but any anxiety that may have been felt was not shown. Ascension was farther from us than Sierra Leone, but it had the advantage of being upon our route south, if somewhat off the course, and the equatorial current ran that way. We learnt later that it was lucky we did not go to that desert island, as the naval ratings formerly maintained there have been entirely, or almost entirely, withdrawn, and turtles would have been the only help available, excellent for civic feasts and as richly nutritious food, but useless for extinguishing a fire.

Things looked black, and the skipper, having on board many hundreds of souls, sent up a wireless S.O.S. and got in touch with the *Waipara*, going north. Our helm was again altered and in a few hours we sighted her. He decided to accompany her back to Sierra Leone, as, in the last resort, the human freight could have been transferred to her. So we turned about and went north. The *Waipara* only made about seven knots, and we steamed about sixteen, so we circled round and round her. That procedure was of great benefit to us, for the ever-changing course helped to clear some of the sulphurous smoke from the *Saxon*. That night it was so pungent that I had to undress as quickly as possible and fly from my cabin to sleep on the upper deck, as most people did.

We duly reached Sierra Leone without having to leave the ship. There we spent eight days, until the *Kenilworth Castle* came to release us.

I had always thought that that port of ill repute, on account of yellow fever and other evils that dwelt there, was situated in a swamp. No doubt the time was when such a description would have applied, but Freetown, which lies only a few feet above sea-level, is now a healthy town. Quite a fine range of hills rises to a height of about 2,000 feet at a short distance from the port. Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson, the Governor and his wife, entertained us most generously and some expeditions were arranged.

Although there is a British Governor and some few white troops are stationed there, the natives control everything in Freetown except a few of the larger firms. They are true negroes, unlike the *Bantus* of South Africa, and are most truculent in their attitude towards white men. One of our passengers went into a shop to purchase something which he saw on the counter. The proprietor (or his manager) was talking to another native when the customer picked up the article and said, "I am rather in a hurry. What is the price of this?" The shopman said, "Can't you see I am talking to this gentleman?" In Sierra Leone, as in Haiti or Colombia, a white skin commands no respect, and it is prudent to avoid a dispute of any kind, for the word of the black would always prevail! The passengers on the *Kenilworth Castle* were most considerate to us, seeing that our intrusion crowded their ship and put them to much inconvenience. We had an uneventful voyage on to Cape Town.

The month spent on the journey enabled me to

discuss at leisure many problems affecting the Union with the Prime Minister and Sir Thomas Smartt, the particular one being how to save at least half of the gold mines from extinction. They could not continue to be operated indefinitely at a loss. I found that neither of the ministers knew the true state of affairs nor the imminence of the catastrophe. One would have thought that even so exalted a personage as the responsible head of the State would be informed upon such a serious subject. The only imaginable explanation is that the members of the Cabinet work in watertight compartments and are not always competent or faithful. Moreover, in the tremendous pressure of work every industrious minister is overwrought. He should not, however, neglect the main business of his particular office, and he should certainly keep his chief fully posted. He omits to do so sometimes, as in this case, and, in my opinion, much of the failure to promote the true interests of a country where parliamentary institutions rule is due to the ever-present fear as to the effect of this or that line of action upon the next elections.

The masses, we know, are easily led by specious promises that appeal to their own desires, whether attainable or not. The truth is frequently unpalatable and hence is unpopular. I know full well that when the current of popular opinion is definitely set in any given direction, no public man can, if he would, divert it. As Herbert Spencer said, no doubt truly, "events make men." If national sentiment favours a monarchy, no politician will advocate a republic—if he be wise. He may slyly gibe here

and there at monarchical pageants, and seek to undermine the throne by insidious hints, but he will wait for a demonstrated change of public sentiment before he becomes a protagonist.

This is true of lesser matters, and particularly so of the gold-mining industry. The number of persons in the Union directly interested as shareholders is trifling compared with the number entitled to vote. Politicians have made a pet hobby of reviling the mine owners, commonly regarded as a few rich individuals, but really, as already explained, a large body of investors, many of whom are comparatively poor people. Hostility against an industry as such would not be easy to arouse, hostility against a few individuals can be easily created and, in the natural order of sequence, the industry with which they are associated ceases to receive friendly or even fair treatment. Thus the mining industry, with the approval of a large majority of voters, has been unduly taxed, has been made the sport of party battles, and has had its progress delayed and its prosperity curtailed by perennial committees of enquiry, interference, and excessive regulations. The Legislature, servile towards agriculture, has concentrated its gaze upon the one and only other well-organised wealth-producing asset of the country. What a short-sighted policy and how dishonest in reality, for when under one pretext or another a further disability or new burden has been imposed, nothing is ever said about the effects excepting by a few who know, whose voices fall upon ears closed to reason—in ignorance or in malice. The people whoulti-

mately suffer the consequences of restricted lives of the mines in reduced employment are not told. They are only tickled with satisfaction at "the mine owner" being victimised. They are not reminded that the finances of the country must be prejudiced in the long run.

Faced with the rapidly approaching Nemesis, which he could no longer ignore or defer, General Smuts came up to the Rand with his technical advisers and found there that the statements I had made were unchallengeable. The damage already done could not be repaired. Mines that had been obliged to shut down could not be reopened. Millions of tons, that could and should have been worked under a sympathetic administration, could not be recovered, but the shutting down of half the mines still in operation could be averted, and momentary political considerations had to be set aside in the face of the impending calamity.

I harbour no illusions as to my persuasive eloquence having won the sympathy of the Prime Minister. That was not so. The decisive factor was his perception that wholesale unemployment, a crippled treasury, and general depression must recoil on the Government. He began to share the anxiety that I had been forced to bear for years, watching the destructive trend of events. He addressed the Labour leaders. He made a far more telling speech than I could have delivered, in spite of my full knowledge. He achieved something—a rather unwilling consent to a better use of the natives and a modification of regulations that trammelled working efficiency.

The Labour leaders, forced into some concessions, were nevertheless bent upon counteracting them in another way. During the war their demands had to be met, and they naturally hated the advent of a new policy. So a strike speedily ensued over a very simple issue, namely, an attempt to intervene in a dispute between the manager and a shift boss at one of the mines. On this subject even public opinion, generally opposed to the management, realised that the concession of that principle must breed disaster, because it involved the end of all discipline and control. I was in Johannesburg at the time, and of course the orators of the market-place inveighed against me in their inflammatory denunciation of capital and capitalists. Even upon this very clear and fundamental principle efforts were made in political circles to induce the companies, through the Chamber of Mines, to make a compromise, but the question was too vital, and the resolute attitude taken up by that body kept the trouble in bounds. The men had to go back to work, having lost a good deal in wages, without gaining anything. But a great struggle was impending. I thought there would be trouble in bringing the modified system of working into force, but had no suspicion of the events to follow. I felt confident that the grave state of the industry would prevent the Government or the representatives of the gold mines from annulling the relaxed regulations, and sailed for England.

The proposed changes were not of a very drastic character. Considerable economy and increased efficiency would result from the abolition of the

waste of much of the natives' time underground due to certain mining regulations, and, had the leaders of the white miners been well advised and desirous of seeing the greatest number of their followers in employment, they would have acquiesced in and aided the reforms. But their hostility to employers, their unbridled ambitions, and possibly in a large extreme section their communistic leanings, led to a campaign of vituperative speech which produced the strike of January 1922, that culminated in the revolt against constituted authority, suppressed after considerable loss of life.

As in the strike of July 1913, no attempt was made to prevent the marching bands from terrorising the men who desired to proceed with their peaceful vocations at the mines, and in due course the industry was brought to a standstill. Remarkable order prevailed through January and February, when the leaders must have realised that the industry would not yield and the men would have to go back to work or starve. Funds were exhausted, credit restricted, and the pecuniary assistance from outside sources drying up. Then came the opportunity for the red revolutionaries. Crimes of the most dastardly and revolting character were committed, and the Union Government, which had temporised with the situation in a pusillanimous spirit, realised that the gravest consequences would soon follow inaction. Police and volunteers were called out, citizen forces enlisted, and the burghers from the country districts ordered to Johannesburg. Friday, March 10th, was the critical day, and fighting continued until March 14th,



*Photo by]*

[*Vandyks.*

THE RIGHT HON. GENERAL J. C. SMUTS, P.C., C.H., M.L.A. (LONDON, 1923).



when a stronghold of the rebels, the Trades Hall at Fordsburg, was bombarded and fell. Between that date and the 17th, when the strike was declared over, the Government forces were employed in clearing-up operations.

General Smuts, who came up to superintend operations, had one or two narrow escapes. His personal bravery is beyond praise, and, if anything, he is apt to err on the side of contempt for danger. I was told by officers who served with him in East Africa that he was often missing, having undertaken a little scouting on his own. Rash and unjustifiable perhaps in a General, but the kind of spirit that everyone must admire. I know him well and am truly devoted to him as a most engaging companion and a courageous man, even though I may not be blind to some of his defects. But we all have failings, and his are in most respects particularly South African. One cannot be alone in his company without appreciating his outstanding intellect and powers of vision. He lacks the magnetic charm of Botha, but I am sure he will go down to history as one of the big men of his time.

I cannot pass away from the sanguinary revolt without paying a tribute to the bravery of the officials on the mines as well as to the exemplary conduct of the natives. All my advices at the time agreed upon that point. On more than one occasion the natives drove off parties of russians and defended the lives of white women and children living upon the mining properties. Of course, the self-respecting miner and artisan took no part in

such attacks, but, in all cases of civil disturbances, the disreputable elements are let loose and no act of savagery, of destruction, or of plunder is too base for them.

Here, indeed, is thought for white South Africa. Education is making rapid strides among the natives. Many of them have a good elementary acquaintance with primary subjects and can write respectably in their own language. But if their scholastic attainments are primitive, not so their industrial training, nor the social acquirements derived from long and intimate association with the white race. In households they do much of the domestic duty. They learn to cook, wait at table, and perform the offices of parlour- and housemaids. In Natal particularly many are nursemaids. What an education for the native, translated from his kraal, where he is also emerging from barbarism, to all classes of white society! Who can venture to describe the effect upon that awakening intelligence? It is assuredly of paramount importance to our prestige that his judgment of our moral qualities shall be founded on a superior level, and, it must be remembered, his contact is not, and cannot always be, with the better elements. It was a disturbing revelation to be told that he talked of good and bad white people during the upheaval. That his mental grasp should have advanced to that stage of discrimination is evidence of his great progress.

The essential requirement is an ever-increasing stream of white emigrants of the right type. White men reduced to the level of labourers in competition

with natives, whose bodies are as powerful, cannot make for future contentment. The ways of living and the social atmosphere in such conditions cannot be elevating for the native nor tend to preserve his high opinion of and respect for the white man. That is why the 1820 Memorial Settlers' Association is performing work of such transcendent value. It should be ardently supported here and overseas. It began modestly and takes great pains in selecting persons who go to South Africa under its auspices. The signs are not discouraging, and, though numbers are of moment, quality is vastly more so. I must not dip deeper into the native question or I shall exceed the length prescribed for my book. But one has only to gaze at the problem to stand aghast. Its peaceful solution depends upon just treatment of the natives and due recognition of their evolution. Windbags who talk lightly of segregation, of suppression, of colour bars, and other mischievous expedients are not only implanting hatred in the minds of those millions, but are imperilling the very foothold of civilisation in predominantly native lands.

After the restoration of order the men flocked back to work. Most of them had sacrificed their savings and many were grievously in debt. The mines could only resume operations gradually. The interruption itself accentuated the distress by limiting for the time being the field of employment. But half the mines were saved, and the displacement of redundant men bore no comparison to the consequences had they been permanently

closed. The strike caused cruel losses to the mining companies, the men, and the trading community. About £10,000,000 of new wealth (which the industry would have produced during the upheaval) was not available. The penalty was widespread and demonstrated the extent to which the whole country depends on its gold output.

Since work was resumed, the cost of production has fallen considerably. This is in a small measure due to a lower wage-bill and the better effort which the underground force is giving, but in a far greater degree to a signal improvement in efficiency, following upon almost spectacular progress in the design and use of appliances. Traders with short-sighted views resent the lesser monthly distribution of money locally and the Labour leaders clamour for higher wages. It is a way of currying favour with the men. It is not in their true interest. When the strike took place, quite half of the gold mines were doomed. Since the resumption of operations a comparatively insignificant number of white men have been dispensed with as redundant and have been driven into accepting less lucrative jobs or into the ranks of the unemployed. Unfortunate as such a condition may be, it entirely fades in importance beside the disastrous alternative of half the employees being suddenly without billets.

In taking the course I did in August 1921 (assuming always that the appreciation of the situation by the Prime Minister was due to my initiation), I was trying to save the mines of lower grade from extinction, and they have been saved. All my

representations were true and have since been corroborated by official investigation. I think the workmen at large now understand the position, but their so-called leaders (always preparing fresh demands for more pay, less work, less order) naturally dislike anyone who exposes their ignorance or their callousness in matters pertaining to the real welfare of their followers.

On my return to South Africa in December 1922 I was met on board by a representative of the detective department, who informed me that they had received warning of communists being sent to Cape Town to murder me. Rather a disquieting welcome for me and my wife! I went through the experience of being shadowed by police officers in plain clothes. I was not alone in that situation, for General Smuts was under the same sentence. I was said to be the author and he the abettor of the changes made. This was true in a measure, but, so far from incurring odium, we were entitled to gratitude. In this world, alas! one man's meat is another's poison, and the unruly elements which had been so effectively dealt with felt a not unnatural animosity towards us. We had prevented their encompassing the ruin of the mines and the suffering that would have ensued—always the foundation of serious and sometimes successful revolutions.

I also received letters from my friends in Johannesburg, in which I was cautioned that danger threatened me up-country. They went so far as to suggest travelling down to Cape Town to discuss affairs there. I could not,

consistent with the retention of self-respect, yield to such fears, so, after spending two weeks at our farm near Somerset West, I went to Johannesburg, where I spent an agreeable and, I hope, useful time. I did not consider police protection necessary in pursuing my daily duties and was not molested in any way. As usual, I went underground at most of the mines we administer. I was pleased to note the vigour with which the work was being conducted and the general atmosphere of goodwill and activity that reigned. I talked to several men in the course of my rounds and met with neither rudeness nor any sign of hostility. On the contrary, a cheerful spirit prevailed and the officials and men appeared to be on the best of terms. Certainly the relations were far more correct and cordial than they were in 1921.

The fact is the white workmen were doing a fair day's work for a fair day's pay, and I am convinced the consciousness of that, so far from stimulating bad feelings, has the opposite effect. In spite of reduced earnings, the rewards still compared favourably with those ruling in other countries, taking cost of living into consideration. Apart from monetary recompense, our white employees are better cared for on the Rand than in any other mining district in the world. Recreation halls with billiard tables, sports grounds, hospitals, and all the amenities are provided on a liberal scale, and the leave regulations are generous.

Left to themselves, I am sure our workmen are sound and reasonable; but, as elsewhere in the

world, professional agitators are perpetually looking out for possible grounds of dispute, and the men in time become the victims of the insidious speeches and propaganda. Every employer at the mines desires to redress real grievances, but when they are, as often happens, manufactured, minds become warped. The effect is similar to that of a conspiracy to make a man believe himself ill. I have been told as a fact that an individual in robust health was waylaid at different points on his route to business by acquaintances who told him, in concerned tones, how unwell he looked. He actually went home to bed, in spite of his health really being quite normal. So it is with any of us who brood rancorously over our position in life. We cannot all be on top, though most of us by sincere effort could get higher up than we do ; still, to nurse our annoyance on that head is to poison our lives.

On December 21st, 1923, I set out for my customary visit to South Africa. Between Waterloo and Southampton the train passed through intermittent falls of snow, which added to the depression usual to me before embarkation. The *Arundel Castle* steamed out of the port at the appointed hour, pursued by a light but bitter north-easterly breeze. The grey skies persisted until we anchored at Funchal, when the sun, so long a truant, burst through rents in the massive banks of cloud and bathed the verdant island in lustrous patches—an entrancing panorama. Thence day by day we ploughed through calm seas, with a rising thermometer, until, nearing the equator, tropical heat

prevailed and the passengers revelled in electrically driven fans and iced beverages. Experience never seems to efface the element of surprise at the rapidity of the climatic change. The imagination can hardly admit the transformation, in one short week, from frigid to torrid zones in which overcoats, furs, blankets and rugs become offensive to the sight and are hidden away. Merely to look upon them is to add to perspiring discomfort. Such is the power of suggestion.

Having completed my tour, I embarked at Cape Town on April 4th, 1924, upon the return voyage. The sea was placid, but we had an unusually protracted spell of heat in the tropics. The swimming bath was extremely popular and is a very attractive addition to the equipment of the modern liner. At sixty-eight degrees the water is fresh and invigorating, but when it rises to eighty-six degrees, as it does in the warm currents, it becomes unpleasantly tepid and sticky. The temperature of the submerged portion of the steel hull corresponds with that of the water, and the still greater heat of the saturated air, accentuated perhaps by the burning rays of the sun, creates very enervating conditions. But beware! The sea sometimes cools down as much as twenty or twenty-five degrees in a two-days run, and, especially in winter travelling north, quite cold winds are apt to be met with on crossing the Line. I mention these facts, so well known to experienced travellers, as a warning to the novice that, much as he may quail before a mere glimpse of warm apparel in the tropics, he should keep his stout clothing handy.

as a precaution against the sudden and dangerous encounter with chilly blasts.

Nothing of moment occurred in South Africa during my stay there, but on April 6th I received a wireless message that General Smuts had decided to dissolve Parliament and appeal to the country in consequence of Mr. Robertson, the recent Administrator of the Transvaal, having been defeated at the Wakkerstroom by-election. The South African party was confident that the seat would be won, and its loss shook the Prime Minister's confidence in his position and induced him to test the feeling of the country. The South African party had been in power under Botha and Smuts since the Act of Union in 1910. The verdict of the polls was decisive, and the new House comprises sixty-three Nationalists, fifty-three South African party, eighteen Labourites, and one Independent. The "pact" between the Nationalists and Labourites was made solely for the discomfiture of General Smuts and his party. Having accomplished its purpose, it was dissolved, but General Hertzog, in forming his Cabinet, has admitted two representatives of the Labour party. This procedure need cause no surprise, although in political principles the Nationalists and the Labourites are the poles apart. Still, the New Prime Minister naturally wishes to command a majority in the House. With the change of Government opens a new era in the history of South Africa.

Were judgment of the future appraised upon electoral oratory, there would be ground for serious

apprehension concerning Imperial and domestic policy, but, happily, in the murky sphere of politics there is a chasm between the stuff served out to the indiscriminating multitude, in suing for their votes, and the performances of the victorious side in office. To venture upon predictions, comforting or disquieting, as to the line likely to be followed under the leadership of General Herzog would be futile, and possibly mischievous. There is a reassuring point in the unquestionable devotion of the Nationalists to South Africa. They have yet to gain experience, and may make mistakes, but I feel fairly confident they will not indulge in hasty experiments either in the political or economic sphere, and will proceed, as all responsible people do proceed, by full investigation prior to action. They will then learn that the Imperial connection cannot be disturbed without grave internal and external danger. Moreover, they are pledged not to attempt secession without the consent of the great majority of the English-speaking section of the population, which there is no reason to believe can be secured.

And it is not only the British who would be opposed to the establishment of a republic, but large numbers of the Dutch too, and particularly many of those who have lived under the British flag for long periods. But besides the body of white men who are content with the position of the Union in the Empire, millions of natives, mostly inarticulate, would deeply resent any attempt to desert it, remembering past experience of the republican system. The attitude of the

new Government towards the coloured and aboriginal people will be watched throughout the white world with anxiety and concern. Wild men may be loose-tongued at times, but every responsible Government will perforce avoid proceedings that would breed collective enmity in the less advanced races. General Hertzog, whatever his own sentiments, will find himself obliged to keep all his disruptive followers in check, or he will court disaster.

Leaving aside the tremendously important native question, it must be admitted that the administration of other home affairs may be fraught with sinister action and consequences. Misgivings in this respect cannot be absent. The gold-mining industry, admittedly the mainstay of prosperity, has always occupied more attention from the Legislature than is wholesome for its welfare, and it would benefit greatly by a jealously guarded political "close season," like that accorded to the living objects of the chase. Since the strike of 1922, which developed into a miniature revolution, significant strides have been made with benefit to the mines, the revenue, and general trade. Naturally, the upheaval caused a serious interruption of wealth production, felt over a wide area, and, if the results have not yet risen to the highest level of expectations, they have averted the economic calamity that would have ensued had pre-strike conditions persisted. It is to be hoped, therefore, that counsels of moderation may guide the new Government in its procedure, for it needs no prophetic gift to affirm that dire effects would follow

an ill-conceived native policy, erroneous action in the science of State finance and taxation, or injurious measures affecting the mining industry. Fanciful theories are particularly enticing to their inventors, but, applied to material affairs, may have shattering powers like heavily charged shells exploding amidst closely packed buildings. Long experience emboldens me to utter this warning. But I will not pursue the theme, being thousands of miles from the scene of action.

During the coming year, as already announced, I propose to lay down some of my responsibilities and to take up my permanent residence in South Africa. I do not intend to enter public life again, but am devoted to the country of my adoption, which I have tried, in my humble way, to serve faithfully in the past. While I have no intention of developing into a captious critic in the evening of life, I may still hope, within my powers, to do some useful work from time to time.

## CHAPTER XI

### OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

**W**HY do those who have passed the greater portion of their allotted sojourn in this "vale of tears" always sigh for "the good old times"? The appalling catastrophe of the Great War, in our era, supplies a valid reason to those who lived through it. But if we can imagine its elimination, with life flowing in its normal channels, the elderly would still hanker after the days of their earlier recollections. They exalt the past and disparage the present, an attitude of mind which is not difficult to understand. Youth lives in the present, unheedful of the past or the future. Middle age finds the present less thrilling than the past, but still has hopes of the future. Old age tolerates, and may even find the present interesting, but has to conjure up the past for its ecstasies, and entertains dismal forebodings regarding the future. The world has probably been "going to the dogs" since man appeared upon it, but somehow the canine species does not appear to have got it yet. So great, however, is the variation in human temperament that we may not dogmatise, for each of us has a different view of life. Most favoured are those who live joyously in the present, ignoring, though

they cannot expunge, their past—good or bad as it may have been. Moreover, the habit of living in the present tends towards callousness about the past and excludes any morbid thoughts of the future. Most of us cannot acquire that habit, so we long rather for days of yore than for those to be.

These remarks apply rather to the personal aspect than to the critical analysis of one epoch contrasted with another. If we take, for example, a period from the middle of Queen Victoria's reign well into that of Edward the Seventh, and compare it with the conditions prevailing since and now, we should have little difficulty in deciding which we should prefer to live in. The horrors of the past decade and its aftermath would leave us in no uncertainty. The particularly adventurous, and the underworld, may revel in the potentialities that face us, but those who see civilisation in jeopardy and various disquieting portents confronting them would gladly return to the earlier age if they could. Then, it is true, refinement of taste was less advanced, the standard of comfort lower, the architecture inferior, the furniture hideous (though solid and well made), and the manners and customs more conventional and stilted. Our pampered bodies would resent to-day the heating undulations of the feather bed or the alternative of a hard mattress upon iron slats devoid of springs. We should abominate the horsehair-covered sofas and chair seats, and the antimacassar to protect the drawing-room plush from pollution by greasy heads. Our eyes would dwell with scorn upon the execrable ornaments

upon the mantelshelf, the vulgar vases, the central *pièce de résistance*, probably a caricature of luscious fruits in porcelain, protected by an oval glass shade, edged at its junction with its rose- or walnut-wood stand with a fringe of chenille. The awful costumes of the day, for instance the crinoline, in an era of prudery indelicately suggestive in its gyrations, and a real source of danger near an open grate. One of my earliest recollections is that of my mother lying upon the floor in flames from this very cause, and my elder brother tearing her skirt off. Happily he was at hand, or the accident might have been fatal. Beware, fair ladies, or that monstrous instrument may again creep into your attire. Recently your hips were being exaggerated ; now, I understand, your silhouette must be straight. These reflections cause me to ask how, by whom, and where the autocrat of fashion is enthroned ? His fiat, like a *ukase* of the Czars of old, reduces you to instant obedience. Can you not depose him in these days of your emancipation ? Will you still allow him at will to distort your graceful form ? At his dictum must your charming waist dwell in the vicinity of your armpits or drop down to the region of your hips ?

Again, why do you allow his myrmidon, the dress designer, in these days of financial stress, to render the "creation" of this season unwearable next ? His ingenuity in that sphere of inventive destruction reminds me of the opening scene in *Julius Cæsar*, where the Cobbler confesses to leading the mob about the streets to wear out their boots ! But I am allowing my vessel to

drift into channels of which I am ignorant, and it will soon strike a snag if it be not promptly steered back to its proper course “the good old times.”

Aeroplanes and broadcasting did not trouble us. There were no tubes, taxis, or telephones then. We wonder now how we got on without them. Quite well, indeed, for it is impossible to miss what we have never had. I am, for instance, colour-blind. Brown, green, and red painted on paper vary, to my eyes, only in shade. The rapturous delight of others over fine colouring manifests the magnitude of my loss, but I am supremely unconscious of it.

It is impossible to compare the social conditions of those days with the order now prevailing, because a complete change has been imposed by the Great War. On the whole, it would seem fair to assert that between, say, 1870 and 1913 there was greater general contentment than now. The present day, in which the nation is still panting, so to speak, from the gigantic efforts of the struggle, finds the balance upset and the future indefinite. Making due allowance for all this, I believe we have rather deteriorated than advanced socially. There are those no doubt who think that the prevalent discontent, industrial strife, enfranchisement of women, extended freedom to young girls, and other novel innovations are sturdy heralds of progress. They will attribute the cry of the elderly for “the good old times” to their having become old-fashioned, out of date, like wares in an emporium kept too long in stock! Perhaps that charge is true, and we grey-haired men fail to keep pace with

the march of ideas. Be that as it may, there are moments in history when the happiness of nations would be served, were it possible, by putting the clock back, and such a moment is now with us. Oh ! for the well-ordered tranquillity of the nineteenth century, with all its faults and crudities !

Still, I have always been an optimist, and I am convinced, if only a return to a less supine and selfish attitude and a deeper sense of responsibility and patriotism among public men can be brought about, there is hope and the gloomy skies may clear. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast." But hope alone, in worldly affairs, is a poor equipment. To see disaster coming and sit silently by, "hoping for the best," is cowardly. The apathetic on-looker is unfortunately not an uncommon specimen of humanity : the rôle is so easy to play and gives no worry or bother. Action needs resolution and sometimes courage.

Many persons with convictions, derived by earnest study and careful reasoning, hold their peace because they consider their position in life does not entitle them to come forward. They make a serious mistake there. Have we not all at times listened to heated arguments in trains and other public conveyances in the course of which sage views have been enunciated by contestants who never attempt to make them generally known ? Their excessive modesty, lack of capacity to write clearly, or laziness, are answerable. Or perhaps there is a still less justifiable reason—the strange aberration that "leading men" are certain to hold those views (if sound) *and to*

*advocate them.* If evil comes, such persons should not revile circumstances or public men, but their own inaction.

Empires that rise to great heights of eminence and power decline and fall ultimately owing to the decay of vigour and to the indifference of their subjects. Luxury, effeminacy, and reliance upon others for defence—as in Rome—sap their inherited grit. In the halcyon days of the British Empire under Disraeli and the late Lord Salisbury, patriotism, sometimes misnamed jingoism, was proudly avowed. “We don’t want to fight, but by jingo if we do,” and so on, was a vital sentiment. The body politic was in safe, virile, and capable hands.

The sickly sentimentality of these days showed itself first in Gladstone’s retrocession of the Transvaal in the face of shameful defeat. It was a rare product then. Whether actually meant to be magnanimous, or dictated as the Rev. A. T. Wirgman, D.D., D.C.L. (in *Storm and Sunshine in South Africa*, p. 161), asserts, on the authority of Lord Kimberley, by President Brand’s threat of the Free State declaring war and the rising of most of the Dutch of the Cape Colony, it was a stupidly craven act. In Europe the power of England was still respected and feared. But the inglorious submission unquestionably undermined her prestige in the world, as it was misinterpreted by the Boers, and proved the incubator of dire subsequent events. Foreign nations very naturally sympathised with the small republic faced by a mighty foe. Their sympathy may not have been

awakened exclusively by the spirit of pity that is always with the weaker side. They took no account of the cause of conflict, but doubtless hoped the great empire might be weakened. They never expected the surrender, and when it took place (magnanimity finding no place in their political creed), they merely had unspeakable contempt for the British Government.

The Midlothian campaign had done its work, not only in regard to the Transvaal but in other directions. The Liberal party, according to its wont, pandered to popular clamour in the sacred name of Liberty, not, one may even venture to suggest, without party considerations. In the perpetual chase for votes the Conservatives proved later on a good second. Trade-Unionism flourished, and the evidence that numbers in combination could overawe the Legislature obviously stimulated the increase of membership. Ambitious members of the Unions soon learnt that violent speeches not only brought fame but remunerative office, and thus the movement grew and extremists multiplied. How could it be otherwise in the heated atmosphere? Does not the bacteriologist make his cultures in a warm environment? And thus, in time, strikes became more and more numerous, and it was apparent that industrial disturbances on a grand scale would inevitably follow. Animosity between workmen and employers was worked up to such a pitch by inflammatory speeches that even revolution was regarded by earnest and calm-minded men as no unlikely event.

I am not, of course, arguing that Trade-Unionism and collective bargaining have not served a useful purpose, and I do not propose to discuss that very important and complicated subject here, but everyone must be concerned at the modern tendency on the part of dissatisfied minorities to flout their elected leaders and create stoppages of work, to the detriment of the public and their followers. Discipline must be enforced or chaos ensues.

When the Great War came, the whole nation rose gloriously to the occasion, as it always will until anæmic decadence robs it of its strength. That dread malady seems to be coming on apace, and a striking illustration is provided by the exemption of Ireland from conscription. Why was it done ? Because men in authority listened to loud-mouthed enemies in Ireland and bent to the craven fear of trouble in that untroubled land. That timorous concession gave heart to the rebels and paved the way for the subsequent “extorted gift” of the bulk of that country to the disloyal South.

The adopted policy of “self-determination” at the Peace Conference has created a number of new territorial entities abroad (all potential areas of future danger), and the unresisted pretensions of Dominion statesmen have, in effect, practically converted the inhabitants of those immense areas overseas into independent nations. They are happily so far ardent allies. May they always remain so ! Egypt has been gratuitously made independent and India is steadily and speedily going the same way. The noble heritage, founded

under Queen Elizabeth by Hawkins, Drake, and the other great sea-captains, the boundaries of which have been greatly extended since by the enterprise, courage, tenacity, and far-sightedness of hundreds of intrepid patriots, is being abandoned inconsequently piecemeal. The "Little Englanders," who opposed any extension of territory, and did not think the colonies of value, would themselves have probably been aghast in these enlightened times at the prodigal squandering of British interests. The "Jubilee Juggins," in the dissipation of his wealth, was a mere tyro compared with the trustees of the British Empire in their lavishness.

Why has all this transpired? Fatalists may answer, "Preordination, the inflexible and irresistible will of a Higher Power." Plain men describe the slide back to political "opportunism," which is, in other words, weakness, misrepresentation, and *suppressio veri*, the stock-in-trade of many politicians. How far the nation is led by public speakers and the press, or by subtle currents that defy analysis, cannot be assessed. National movements that end in a radical change of prevailing conditions appear to be growths. Long periods usually elapse between their inception and maturity. The press and the orators must influence their development to some extent, and that is why public men should be, above all, honourable and sincere. Character does not always accompany capacity. Manhood suffrage cannot tend to a higher moral level in public institutions. Lecky, in his *History of Eng-*

*land in the Eighteenth Century* (Vol. III, pp. 420-1), puts that aspect of advancing democracy thus :

“ Politics would be unlike any other product of the human mind if it were not true that a high average of intelligence among the electors was necessary for a high average of intelligence among the representatives. If the predominating power of election be placed in the hands of the poorest and the most ignorant classes of the community ; if it be entrusted mainly to those who have no political knowledge, no real political opinions, no sense of political responsibility ; if this great mass of elective incompetence be carefully sheltered from the influence of the more instructed classes, what can possibly be expected except the degradation of Parliament and the decay of the Empire ? Nothing in the whole history of superstition is more grotesque than the doctrine that the panacea for parliamentary evils is to be found in lowering the suffrage, as though by some amazing process of political alchemy the ability and intelligence of the representative body were likely to increase in direct proportion to the ignorance and incapacity of the elective body. And the difficulty of the problem is greatly aggravated by the fact that it is necessary to the efficiency of Parliament that it should not only maintain a high average ability, but also that it should include many young men capable of devoting their lives to the work of statesmanship.”

Education is the only hope of the future, because the masses are approaching the era of their rule. To-day the Labour party, as it is called, is in power. Its representatives in the Cabinet are in

many cases not Labour men at all. But that does not signify. So far their tenure of office is uncertain, as they do not command a majority of their own in the House of Commons. That, however, can only be a question of time, unless some unexpected development causes the pendulum of popular feeling to swing temporarily the other way. No educational campaign can make up enough leeway to render the masses really qualified to govern. This should have been thought of before the franchise door was opened so widely. It is too late now and futile to regret.

The public men who, regardless of consequences, have brought about this position, and were clearly actuated rather by their own ambitions than by considerations of national safety and advancement, are unrepentant. They will repent too late when, as it were, they are kicked downstairs. The once great Liberal party is already tasting the bitterness of past follies. No one wants them. They have betrayed the class to which most of them belong, and are despised and rejected by those they are mainly responsible for elevating. All their talk of making the world safe for democracy avails them nothing. They would have served themselves and their country better by pointing out the real problem: how to make democracy safe for the world! Listen to Schuré in his *Prophètes de la Renaissance*, p. 336:

“ L'avènement de la democratie dans la politique a produit, par l'irruption des masses dans

tous les domaines, un véritable assaut contre tout idéal qui s'élève audessus de la mediocrité.

“ Et l’élite, dont le rôle éternel sera de discipliner les masses en les eduquant, s’est laissé hypnotiser par ces foules aveugles, en leur concédant la maîtrise, qui *lui* appartient.

“ Ainsi, au lieu d’élèver graduellement les masses à sa hauteur elle tend à s’abaisser à *leur* niveau.

“ Nous avons vu, il est vrai, dans la dernière guerre (qui a soulevé la moitié du monde en un magnifique élan pour La Justice et La Liberté) que ces masses sont capables de sublimes élans à certaines heures. Mais elles ne l’ont été que parceque leur guides (représentés par un certain nombre d’individualités supérieures) ont su reveiller en elles l’étincelle divine.

“ Grace à ce sursaut l’Impérialisme Prussien, dernière et monstrueuse incarnation des antiques tyrannies, a pu être vaincu.

“ Mais elle n’était pas encore à terre que les forces du mal, qui s’agittent toujours dans les bas-fonds de l’humanité, suscitaient le Bolshevisme—cet autre forme de matérialisme qui remue les masses humaines avec le levier de l’envie et la chimère de l’égalité absolue. Cette ruée de la bête humaine déchainée, qui ménace d’envahir le monde entier, est la résultante du matérialisme et du nihilisme intellectuel, cultivé par une soi-disante élite, qui s’est répandu dans la foule, en y fomentant tous les bas instincts, à partir de la seconde moitié du XIX siècle.

“ La lumière descend d’en haut dans les profondeurs. Elle ne vient pas d’en bas.

“ La Nature est aristocratique, et l’Univers est une hiérarchie.

“ Malheur à ceux qui ne cultivent pas en eux-mêmes et dans les autres la hiérarchie des trois mondes. Car c’est la loi Divine.

“ La servir c'est travailler à la manifestation de Dieu ; la combattre c'est l'obscurcir.”

The “ three worlds ” is the hierarchy of (1) Spirit, (2) Soul, (3) Matter.

“ For forms of government let fools contest,” wrote Pope, but he did not then envisage the disruptive agencies of to-day—socialism and communism. Given good administration, thus far assured in England through its very competent and honourable Civil Service, the particular complexion of the political party in power is only of secondary importance. In time, of course, the Civil Service and the administration will deteriorate as the result of a misguided and persistently pursued policy. Dishonest leadership inevitably breeds corruption.

On the ground so ably put forward by Lecky, and so incontrovertible, the extended power of the masses has adversely affected the personnel of Parliament, and it follows that the quality of the Cabinet must suffer. Thus our just pride in the officials of the State may in time (as in other countries where *demos* has become supreme and where the canker of corruption has poisoned the public service) receive a nasty blow.

The complexities of modern life in business—covering the whole field of enterprise in commerce, industry, and agriculture—are so great that no surprise can be felt at there being wide differences of opinion upon the proper functions of the State in that sphere. Is it conceivable that even super-human beings (likely to be found in a Cabinet)

can in themselves combine all the talent, enterprise, and skill reposing in the mass of owners, directors, and managers now in charge of material activities ? Is experience of State control happy ? Will salaried Government officers work with as much enterprise (i.e. take risks) and spirit as individuals dependent upon themselves for success ? Would employment by politicians contribute to effective competition in a competitive world ? Would it make for cleaner and more efficient public life ?

If the reply to these questions is in the affirmative, then State control would be desirable ; but most people will reply in an emphatic negative. Thus the State should avoid embarking upon any branch of trading outside certain public utilities which need not be enumerated. State ownership never has, never will, and never could satisfactorily supplant private enterprise. But the politicians who see advancement in playing up to the gallery provide education which leads the masses, so easily swayed, into every sort of baneful error. It is necessary to cite only the amazing advancement of Italy under Mussolini to answer the whole mass of mischievous eloquence indulged in by the aspirants to popular favour.

Let us examine a few of the specifics poured into the minds of the lower classes. I can glance here only at a few of the most glaring examples. It is difficult to understand how any man of common sense can support the pernicious and destructive doctrine of "the lump of

labour," or preach the creed of "ca' canny." Pursuit by the working classes of a course based upon such principles can lead only to their ruin. Short hours and high pay, coupled with slipshod and insincere work, may appeal to lazy, incompetent, and bad workmen, but the sensible artisan classes of England are fully aware that competition with men who refuse to act upon such ideas must fail. Still, there are so-called leaders always pushing in that direction, which, if they are conscious of effects, is treachery to their class. Owners and workmen can only divide in some form (difficult, I confess, to adjust equitably) the surplus after working costs are met; but when those costs are equal to the market value of the product, there will remain no surplus to divide. Then comes unemployment. A standard wage, and a standard of living, cannot be maintained by specious theories, State subsidies, or any other ingenious conception; they depend upon the selling value of the commodities exceeding their cost of production. Any other basis must fail in the end, despite strikes, industrial warfare *à outrance*, or any of the hypotheses which rhetoricians can put forward. Is it not a crime to mislead those least capable of understanding supply and demand or cause and effect?

Mankind in the mass has little idea of how we all live, and a short excursion into that region may be useful. There are three primary sources of livelihood. Firstly, the products of the soil, which, did we return to barbarism, could alone sustain man's existence. Secondly, the mineral supplies,

mostly derived below the earth's crust. Thirdly, the water power, which engineers are able to harness, and the more recent feat of the chemist in the extraction of nitrogen from the air. Nature has endowed us with these primary assets, and others perhaps yet to be discovered. But none of them can be utilised without the capital and labour of man. All the other means of livelihood are attributable to the conversion of primary sources into a multitude of products for our convenience, comfort, and luxury. No dividing line can be drawn between the essential and the superfluous in our phase of civilisation.

I quote from a speech I delivered in May 1923 :

“Food and shelter from the elements are primary needs. Some clothing too, though with training it might be reduced and even eliminated—an unpleasant picture—the amenities of life abolished, replaced by a social condition, primitive, barbaric, and uncomfortable, but modern practices are tending that way. Tobacco, beer, bedding, tables, chairs, cutlery, boots, socks, brushes and combs, and a list of infinite length, are not essentials. Do away with them and millions upon millions would have no occupation.

“I put the extreme to draw the true perspective. A definition of luxury is impossible. It may be interpreted as profusion and waste which is reprehensible, or, in the sense I am using it, as the hall mark of civilisation. Moreover, the greater the abundance, the variety, and the utility of commodities that contribute to the comfort and elevation of mankind, the wider the field of employment. It is a form of mental derangement to suppose that the imposition of a Spartan way

of living is going to benefit the masses. The reverse is the truth. We may well deplore the gradual extinction of the well-to-do classes, the shutting-up of large houses, the contraction of spending power, and the general limitation of so-called luxury because it is narrowing the avenues of employment for the wage earners. They do not know it. Men of affairs do, and it is cowardly not to say so. We are living in an era of sickly sentimentality—not to be confounded with true sentiment—and compromise, the curse of upright action."

There is another elementary fact in economics that is not generally appreciated and one that I learned by experience on the diamond and gold fields. At a given date in the progress of both those industries, I found that the value of the output, after deducting from it the dividends sent to non-resident shareholders, and paying for stores from overseas, was insufficient to sustain the white population alone. There were no other sources of wealth production. How were the people supported? The explanation is not difficult to find. Primary production not only has its value in the year of recovery but has a fertilising value which is cumulative and goes on doing duty subsequently. The truth of this statement is only demonstrable in a place where a new primary industry comes into being and is the sole fountain of sustenance. When, as the result of its establishment, other industries are founded, the problem becomes complicated. Thus, in England, where a maze of enterprises are concerned, proof ceases to be possible and theories

(sometimes pernicious) find opponents and supporters. I believe that the respective champions of Free Trade and Protection in the extreme form are neither right. For the reasons given, the first concern should be to safeguard primary industries. Farming stands in the first rank as an industry to foster, and it seems a grave mistake to have allowed land in England to go out of cultivation. There are, of course, localities where the poverty or the rocky nature of the soil renders it unsuitable as arable land, but much of the grass land was, in days gone by, the home of flourishing crops, as Sir Charles Fielding shows in his book *Food*.

The dominant factor is, as already shown, the higher value of primary production than of wealth secured in any other form. By skilful management, the land gives its crops year after year and, outside the persons engaged in raising them, affords indirect support to many other industries. Whether any other occupations should be protected or not depends upon the extent to which they benefit the country, the number of people they employ, the conditions under which they operate in comparison with the conditions ruling in a competitive country. Every case differs and, for a well-founded judgment to be formed, must be investigated separately and all the factors reviewed. Cheapness is not the sole gauge, for it is obvious, if all the commodities used in a country were imported, its inhabitants would be earning nothing and could not pay for them. Assuming, however, some of them possessed accumulated funds and invested them abroad,

the country would suffer, because the profits earned, though brought to the native land, would again be exported for reinvestment abroad and the fertilising value of the working costs in producing the commodities would always benefit the place where they were spent.

Labels, loosely used, like those of "Free Trade" or "Protection," do infinite harm, because they become political cries, and the masses, who really know nothing of the subject, range themselves under the one or the other and, like flocks of sheep, follow their respective leaders. Politics again—hateful politics—use, in a question of vital consequence, mean phrases like "Your food will cost you more," without answering the pertinent rejoinder, "How will our earnings be affected ?

The talk of a levy on capital is another mischievous, impracticable proposal. In the ears of the indigent, it no doubt sounds melodious and they have visions of despoiling the rich and the well-to-do and sharing in the plunder. Millions of educated persons know that death duties and super-taxes are a levy on capital in the only practical form. The necessities of the nation may be an excuse for those confiscatory measures. There is no other justification, and it should not be forgotten that they do lessen the field of employment. To pass a measure authorising the tax-gatherer to exact a given proportion of everyone's possessions would produce a deadlock in every avenue of profit-earning undertaking and nothing but disaster would follow. A rummage sale by the Inland Revenue would be humorous

were it not so serious, for, in spite of debased prices, there would be no buyers.

Then the brilliant fallacy that national credit can be sustained permanently by an output of attractively printed strips of paper money, un-backed by gold or any other real value, is being played with by certain economists of standing. Are the activities of John Law forgotten? Nemesis always overtakes those who deal in false coin. So long as faith subsists in the intention sooner or later to give value for the paper, it can be made to do duty as a temporary expedient; but shake faith, and collapse follows.

The question of unemployment is grave. The sympathy of every right-minded man goes out to those who try but fail to find work. As long as the nation has the wherewithal, starvation must not be permitted to prey upon the unfortunate, but, if their moral fibre is to be preserved, doles must be given with great circumspection and restraint. To let charity vie with wages is reprehensible. Are not votes, again, answerable for laxity in that direction? It is so tempting to make concessions at the expense of others. Unless the working classes are honestly led and politicians eschew the practice of appealing to their passions, prejudices, and lower instincts, evil will come of it.

It would be fruitless to argue with that heterogeneous band that flies the flag of socialism. Their ranks contain as many shades of opinion as there are differences in human faces. A vastly higher level of general enlightenment may be

reached in time and by some miraculous revelation self-interest may cease to actuate us in our affairs. The millennium will have come, and then only can socialism flourish.

Persons who find themselves badly placed in life are easily persuaded that their condition is due to the social system in being and not to chance, circumstances, or their own shortcomings. It is not an unnatural view for them to entertain. At the same time it is practically certain that no system can be invented to supplant individualism in a competitive world.

If we examine the difference in aptitudes and vigour even among members of the same family—due no doubt to attributes inherited from a long line of ancestry and not visible, perhaps, in their immediate progenitors—we are able to perceive the vagaries of breeding. The same differentiation is to be seen in the animal and vegetable kingdom, and when we add the further divergences created by soil, climate, and general environment, we perceive the futility of attempting any sort of equalisation.

Were it possible, however, to equalise mankind, which, as demonstrated, would be contrary to nature, the social effects would be intolerable until all ranks were trained to a common level. Then the grey monotony of it would be nauseating. A stereotyped mental diet would have to be provided, which, like any one article of food applied to the body, would become abhorrent. The jaded palate would crave for a change, any change almost, but something piquant for choice.

Disparities are as inevitable as they are stimulating and give a zest to life. They can no more be confined to material possessions or position than to physical or mental efficiency. It would doubtless be possible to degenerate; it is impossible to raise natural inferiority to the level of natural superiority.

Bolshevism and communism are upon another, but essentially rational, plane. There is nothing unselfish, benevolent, or scrupulous in their tenets. The social pyramid is to be turned upside-down and the dregs of the nation put on top. Quite a dazzling prospect for the dregs! After obliterating all the finer elements in the nation and terrorising the balance by means of torture, using every weapon of horror, the dregs are to feast upon the stolen plunder. Religion, refinement, and decency are to be adjured, and upon the ashes of civilisation a new structure is to be built. Raised upon such a foundation, its quality would be execrable and an age would pass before the present level of sanity, prosperity, and refinement could be regained. We have heard much of the Russian tragedy, but we do not begin to know the magnitude of its toll in life, grief, and treasure. Since the great flood, no historical record tells of any natural phenomenon at all comparable in destructive immensity.

The catastrophe of civil war upon a grand scale may be likened to a terrestrial convulsion, but the latter is merciful and puny as a parallel. Traverse the base of Vesuvius for some idea of the scene when Pompeii and

Herculaneum were submerged. Seething lava pouring out of the crater swept down the mountain, devastating the countryside, blotting out every living thing in its path, hiding the works of man with a thick covering of molten minerals and ashes. Then, a relief of the pressure, a halt in the lambent flood, the plastic mass gradually cooling and congealing into solid rock. Father Time at work : rain and the sun's rays playing upon the hard skin and starting the work of disintegration ; wind and more rain through the ages sweeping the detritus down the slopes into hollows where it was imprisoned ; delicate vegetation (the same that had inhabited the vicinity before the eruption) appearing once more upon the surface to hide the work of extinction ; and once again man, the successor of those who tilled the land when, like dry leaves in a windstorm, they were swept away, toiling to snatch sustenance from the sparse soil. Nature, so quick and so violent in her act of destruction, so slow and methodical in her work of repair. Thus the cycle is complete.

How like mankind in revolution ! An unconsidered upheaval, fierce, cruel, unheeding ; life, culture, learning, treasure, wantonly sacrificed. Hate, envy, and malice let loose, spreading a hideous mantle upon civilisation and behaving as the inconsequent lava. The underworld in the ascendant. The forces of disorder revelling in an orgy of blood and plunder. Tyranny at the helm. Starvation and disease rampant. Then, satiation and exhaustion, restoration of

order and peace, tears all spent, and toil undreamt-of exacted to supply the remnant with the barest needs of life. The realities of the situation exposed upon the mirror of life for all to see. Perhaps a century of stress and suffering to reach the position attained before the upheaval. What a tragedy ! What a leaf from the crude and cruel book of Nature ! Is man destined from time to time, and again and again, to imitate plutonic agencies in his vain quest for the ideal ?

Perhaps the human aspiration to rise above nature in his own species is a mere presumption, and man, like the lower forms of life, is condemned for ever to struggle not only for place but for existence. Perhaps, too, that very struggle may herald an ultimate triumph which none can yet picture. That knowledge has grown bears no contradiction ; the point of doubt is whether or not the nature of man has improved.

The march of invention has been prodigious. The march of civilisation, gauged by the light of the virtues, by general standards of honour and goodwill, is at least slower, and is perhaps merely marking time. When our finite intelligence tries to imagine the infinite—the immensity and illimitable complexities of the universe—and visualises the minuteness of our globe in the revolving whole, we must be strangely constituted to believe the marvel accidental. The perfection of design and the pervading operation of natural laws render that assumption unacceptable to most of us. More-

over, if we appreciate the majesty and beauty of nature, displayed upon the earth, we are forced to conclude by analogy that there is purpose in everything, and that the foundation is all-powerful and benevolent. The acceptance of a conscious beginning compels our profound reverence for the First Cause, no matter whence, how, or in what Form originating.

I shall not pursue this supreme subject, which, however, leads to a practical question affecting man in a material way. Are what Gibbon describes as “the eternal discords of the human race” permanently ineradicable? Are the cataclysms that wreck sections of the world from time to time—the wars and revolutions, the clash of races, the struggle between man and man, beast and beast, plant and plant—to be the eternal lot of the living? Can the discords be harmonised? Is such a sequel intended finally? I put the questions, knowing them to be unanswerable. The development of intellect and the cultivation of qualities we esteem as the virtues may help us to build better than we know.

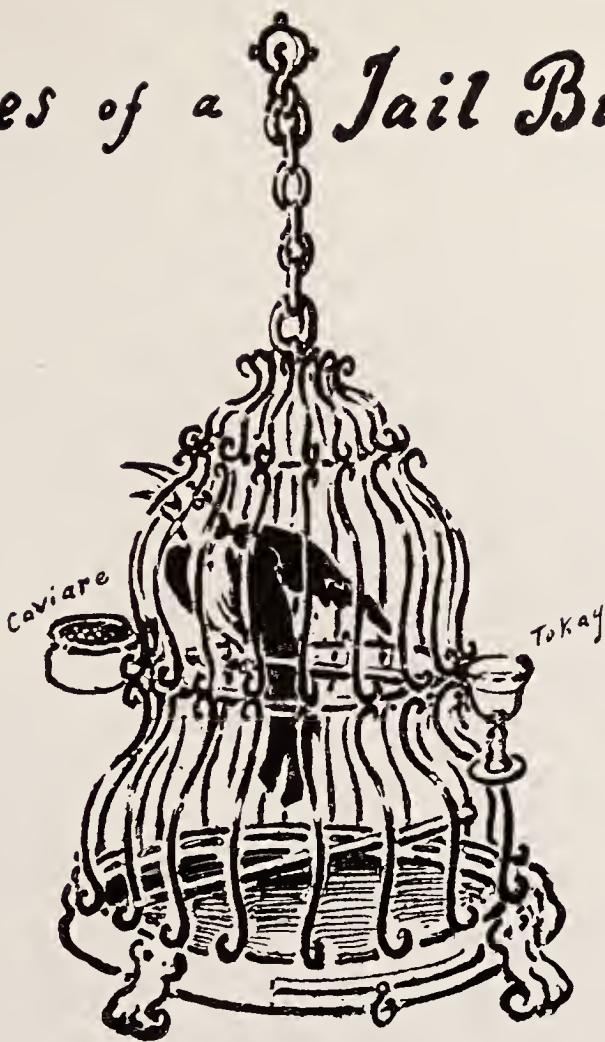


## AN AFTERTHOUGHT

**I**N books, as in persons and things, first impressions are of importance. With this fact in mind I was cogitating upon the choice of a title, but the more I reflected, the more undecided I became. At that stage some members of my family and a friend or two invaded my study. They enquired how I was getting on. Incautiously, I confided my perplexities to them. They seemed sympathetic and asked me to give some samples of my tentative selections. I rolled off a few—"Leaves from a Life," "Five Decades of Experiences," "Recollections Nomadic," "Flights and Falls in a Career," and so forth. They would have none of them. They scoffed at them. They suggested grossly ribald substitutes, neither dignified nor descriptive, and bursts of applause greeted each new outrageous proposal. There was no suppressing their levity. My only course was to turn them out of the room—or to join in and pretend I thought it funny. Being an accommodating person, I took the more genial course and said, "Perhaps you would like me to adopt W. L. George's title, 'Nearly Hanged.'" They applauded that as apt and true. I was thoroughly roused by that time and blurted out, "Why not 'Notes of a Jail-bird'?" They all

pounced on that as perfect, my daughter among them. Her husband, William Nicholson, the artist, seized a pen and drew a caged bird with its beak wide open ! That decided me. I chose the hackneyed title that launches my book, but reproduce his clever drawing, too precious to be lost.

# Notes of a Jail Bird



by

*Sir Lionel Phillips*



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